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THE

COLLECTED WORKS OF WILLIAM HAZLITT

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOLUME TEN

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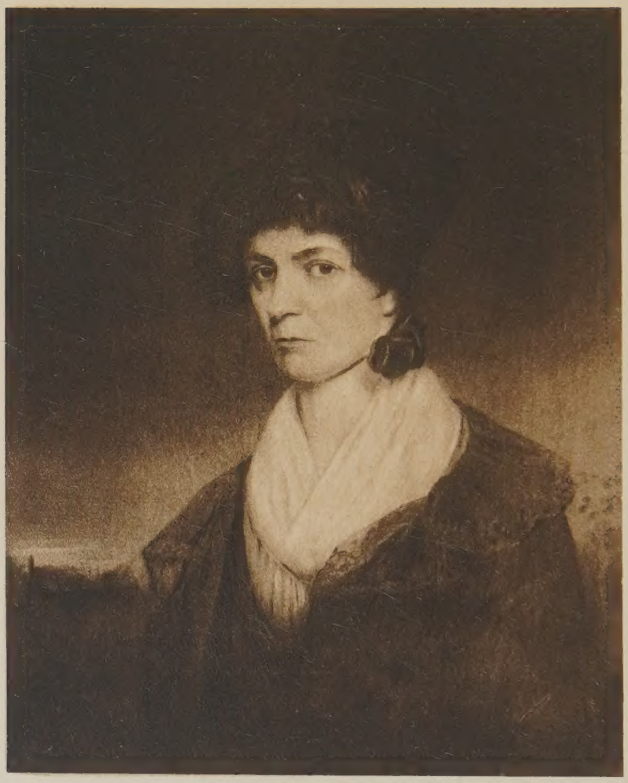

Margaret Hazlitt,
1771-1845
From an oil painting by John Hazlitt.

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

WILLIAM HAZLITT

EDITED BY A. R. WALLER

AND ARNOLD GLOVER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

W. E. HENLEY

Contributions to the Edinburgh Review

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

DUNLOP'S HISTORY OF FICTION

Vol. xxiv.] [*November* 1814.

We are very much of Mr. Dunlop's opinion,—that 'life has few things better, than sitting at the chimney-corner in a winter evening, after a well-spent day, and reading an interesting romance or novel.' In fact, of all the pleasures of the imagination those are by far the most captivating which are excited by the representation of our fellow-creatures struggling with great difficulties, and stimulated by high expectations or formidable alarms. And if the reader or spectator have no personal interest in the subject, his emotions are but slightly, if at all, affected by his judgment concerning its authenticity. On the contrary, the fictions of genius may be rendered far more engaging than the greater part of real history.

But the invention of interesting narratives is by no means an easy exercise; and we apprehend that tales entirely and professedly fictitious are exclusively the production of a civilized age; and are never introduced into any nation till long after the genuine exploits of its own heroes have been sung by its bards (who are the first historians), for the entertainment and information of ruder times. These journalists may indeed be expected to exaggerate the truth; and, on very slender evidence, or merely from the warmth of their imagination, to represent the powers of the invisible world as interposing their mighty influence in the shape most agreeable to the prevalent superstitions. But in relating events which passed within the memory of their hearers, these exaggerations would generally be kept within such bounds as not to shock the credulity, and consequently be less gratifying to the national curiosity, and even to the national vanity of their audience: and hence sagacious historians are able to extract a probable narrative from the songs of contemporary bards.

Long however before the period of sober and scrutinizing history, the more ancient of these songs would gradually receive additions and embellishments from the patriotic fancies of the persons who successively transmitted them to posterity; of the extent of which some idea may be formed from the amplifications with which the account of any surprising event is adorned, even during a short time after its first promulgation, as it passes from house to house, and from village to village. A bard also of one generation, gathering information from those of another, and from the traditionary anecdotes of the aged with whom he conversed, would be apt to compose a narrative in which a greater latitude would be assumed for adjusting it to his own views or to the taste of his countrymen, according to the remoteness of the time to which it referred, and his security from the examination of critical inquirers. And we may well suppose that his audience would receive indulgently, or rather would indispensably require a high colouring of the marvellous in the accounts of their favourite heroes.

In ruder times, therefore, the fiction would chiefly consist, not so much in the troublesome task of inventing incidents, as in exaggeration: And the tendency to exaggerate would act in two ways: it would on the one hand enlarge the scale and heighten the colours of the natural objects and real events which were understood to have existed; and on the other hand it would multiply as well as magnify, and would render distinctly visible the supernatural interpositions which were suggested by the popular creed. When Achilles in a pet retired with his myrmidons, it is probable enough that Diomed was roused to exert himself to the utmost in the common cause, and performed wonders in the first engagements after the secession of his great rival. On such an occasion it would not be unnatural for his brave companions, and still less for enraptured parasitical bards, to have expressed their admiration by saying, that they beheld him as if shining with a light from heaven in the battle; that Minerva was his friend and protector; that under her guidance he not only slew many of the Trojan chiefs, but completely routed and made an incredible havock among the throng of the less noble combatants, who furiously assailed him, led on by the God of war in all his terrors;—in short, that Diomed was a match for Mars himself. But the heroes of the Trojan expedition were seen as visions by Homer and his cotemporaries: And, according to the representation in the fifth book of the Iliad, Minerva adorns the warrior with a real star-like flame beaming from the crest of his helmet; she obtains Jupiter's permission to assist the Greeks; rouses Diomed's courage who had been compelled to retreat; with her own divine hand, she pulls down the

charioteer, mounts into his seat, and drives to where Mars was combating in propriâ personâ, but who is soon wounded by Diomed in the small guts, νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα, and sent roaring as loud as nine or ten thousand men to his father Jupiter on the top of Olympus. Thus the surprising events which were but moderately hyperbolized at the time, in the relation of the eyewitnesses, and ascribed to the secret influences of the supernatural powers, rather than to the agency of their daylight apparitions, are wonderfully changed in the representation, at no great distance of time. The real hero slays his tens; the hero of the men-singers and women-singers slays his thousands and his tens of thousands: The real hero is large of bone and strong of muscle; the hero of the poet is a Hercules; and if not a giant, he is much more—like Tom Thumb he is the conqueror of giants: Those superior Beings, with whom the popular religion or superstition has peopled heaven and earth and hell, mingle openly in the fray: they are seen and recognized as distinctly as any others of the Dramatis Personæ, and act and converse very sensibly, sometimes very foolishly, not only with each other, but with their mortal associates. These superior Beings themselves, indeed, frequently owe their supernatural character, and in some cases, their very existence, to exaggeration. The heroes in process of time become demi-gods; and at last are invested with the full honours and emoluments of Deities acknowledged and established by law;

> 'Romulus et Liber pater, et cum Castore Pollux;
> Post ingentia facta Deorum in templa recepti.'

The unknown causes which actuate the material world,—the passions which agitate the human breast,—and even several of those shadows of entity, the allegorical characters, have been distinctly personified, and many of them admitted to seats of greater or less dignity in the sacred college of Divinities.

But in general the most enormous exaggeration would disfigure those events which were the most ancient in the national traditions; —those events which bordered upon utter darkness and appeared to be coeval with the birth of Time. In a period of such dim antiquity, it appears that a certain Crown Prince of Crete, very enterprising and very unprincipled, rebelled successfully against his father, seemingly still more unprincipled than his son, and carried every thing before him. This worthy young gentleman, after being worshipped by the Cretans during his life, very much, we suppose, as other successful tyrants are worshipped, had the astonishing good fortune, in the course of a few centuries after his death, to be acknowledged as the King of Gods and men throughout all Greece, and afterwards

through the whole extent of the Roman empire. The abortive insurrection of his kinsmen in Thessaly was in due time represented as the enterprise of stupendous giants, who heaped mountain upon mountain to attack the Thunderer in his Olympian Palace. And as nobody could tell any thing about the parents of these great men, it was concluded, with a degree of probability amounting to what in the language of philosophers is with much propriety called moral certainty, that they had risen out of the ground like mushrooms. The events prior to his establishment on the throne, appear dimly in the back ground of the sacred mythology—involved in all the awful obscurity of mysteries, not to be profaned by the scrutiny of impious mortals. We are told that there was a war in heaven of the Titans against Saturn the chief of the Gods, for not having devoured his son Jupiter. For it would appear that this good king, in whose reign, according to the poets, all the world, except the royal family, were virtuous and happy, had cajoled his elder brother Prince Titan out of his inheritance, under the express condition of destroying, or, according to the more elegant mystical account, of eating his male children as soon as they were born. The chief of the gods was at first defeated and imprisoned by the Titans, but was soon rescued and restored by Jupiter, the hopeful Crown Prince, who afterwards expelled his father, and reigned in his stead.

In some such manner real events are represented by the bards of future generations; with a strange fantastic jumble of hyperbole and allegory, converted partly or entirely from a figurative to a literal meaning, the marvels of superstition, childish fancies, and the brilliant conceptions of poetical genius; while during the whole time there is but little invention of incident, and far less of any thing like that artificial fabrication of a continued fiction, which critics like Bossu have ascribed to Homer so gratuitously, and indeed in such contradiction to all that is known from experience concerning the progress of the human mind in any of the arts.

Fictitious incidents would generally be at first introduced by a much easier method than invention into the narratives of the bards. The gentlemen of this ancient, itinerant corporation would naturally, in the course of their peregrinations, become acquainted with many tales, both foreign and domestic, not generally known to the rest of their countrymen; and would be tempted to steal the most striking of the incidents, whether true or false, and transfer them to the characters in their own histories. Various instances of such pilfering are every day detected in the story-tellers of society, as well as in authors both ancient and modern; and hence it sometimes happens that the same transaction appears in several different associations. Thus, much use

has been made, in various books, of the transaction so well known to the readers of plays and romances,—the conspiracy for ruining a lady's reputation by carrying her friends to a hiding-place from whence they could spy the improper behaviour of a person who was dressed so as to resemble her. This clumsy contrivance seems to have been stolen by Bandello from Ariosto,—and has been employed both by Shakespeare and Spenser. And when authors endowed with so fertile inventions condescend to borrow incidents so ill-contrived, (and indeed they sometimes stoop to still poorer thefts), we cannot doubt that similar plagiarisms must have been frequent among the inferior practitioners in the trade of story-making.

In fact, the piracy of incidents may be traced from the most remote antiquity down to modern times, in the histories both of supernatural agents and of mortal men. There are strong presumptions that the Grecian archives of Hercules, and of Jupiter himself, have been enlarged by plunder both from Egypt and Asia. The Jewish visionaries superadded to the truths of the sacred Scriptures many curious anecdotes relating to the celestial principalities,—which they learned from the authentic records of their Chaldean conquerors. The Romances of chivalry have been enriched by contributions from various quarters; from the songs of the Scalds, the bards of the Northern tribes that overran so many provinces of the Roman empire; from the tales of Arabia, Persia, and other eastern nations; and also from the fables transmitted by the classics of Greece and Rome. Mr. Dunlop very properly rejects any theory which would ascribe the beauties of romantic fiction to any one of these sources exclusively, and we shall quote his general account of the subject, as a fair specimen of his style and sagacity.

'From a view of the character of Arabian and Gothic fiction, it appears that neither is exclusively entitled to the credit of having given birth to the wonders of romance. The early framers of the tales of chivalry may be indebted to the northern bards for those wild and terrible images congenial to a frozen region, and owe to Arabian invention that magnificence and splendour, those glowing descriptions and luxuriant ornaments, suggested by the enchanting scenery of an eastern climate,

> "And wonders wild of Arabesque combine
> With Gothic imagery of darker shade."

'It cannot be denied, and indeed has been acknowledged by Mr. Warton, that the fictions of the Arabians and Scalds are totally different. The fables and superstitions of the Northern bards are of a darker shade and more savage complexion than those of the

Arabians. There is something in their fictions that chills the imagination. The formidable objects of nature with which they were familiarized in their northern solitudes, their precipices and frozen mountains and gloomy forests, acted on their fancy, and gave a tincture of horror to their imagery. Spirits who send storms over the deep, who rejoice in the shriek of the drowning mariner, or diffuse irresistible pestilence; spells which preserve from poison, blunt the weapons of an enemy, or call up the dead from their tombs —these are the ornaments of northern poetry. The Arabian fictions are of a more splendid nature; they are less terrible indeed, but possess more variety and magnificence; they lead us through delightful forests, and raise up palaces glittering with gold and diamonds.

'It may also be observed, that, allowing the early Scaldic odes to be genuine, we find in them no dragons, giants, magic rings, or enchanted castles. These are only to be met with in the compositions of the bards who flourished after the native vein of Runic fabling had been enriched by the tales of the Arabians. But if we look in vain to the early Gothic poetry for many of those fables which adorn the works of the romancers, we shall easily find them in the ample field of oriental fiction. Thus the Asiatic romances and chemical works of the Arabians are full of enchantments similar to those described in the Spanish, and even in the French, tales of chivalry. Magical rings were an important part of the eastern philosophy, and seem to have given rise to those which are of so much service to the Italian poets. In the Eastern peris, we may trace the origin of the European fairies in their qualities, and perhaps in their name. The griffin or hippogriff of the Italian writers, seems to be the famous Simurgh of the Persians, which makes such a figure in the epic poems of Sadii and Ferdusii.

'A great number of these romantic wonders were collected in the East by that idle and lying horde of pilgrims and palmers who visited the Holy Land through curiosity, restlessness, or devotion, and who, returning from so great a distance, imposed every fiction on a believing audience. They were subsequently introduced into Europe by the Fablers of France, who took up arms and followed their barons to the conquest of Jerusalem. At their return, they imported into Europe the wonders they had heard, and enriched romance with an infinite variety of Oriental fictions.

. . . . . .

'A fourth hypothesis has been suggested, which represents the machinery and colouring of fiction, the stories of inchanted gardens, monsters, and winged steeds, which have been introduced into romance, as derived from the classical and mythological authors; and

as being merely the ancient stories of Greece, grafted on modern manners, and modified by the customs of the age. The classical authors, it is true, were in the middle ages scarcely known; but the superstitions they inculcated had been prevalent for too long a period, and had taken too firm a hold on the mind, to be easily obliterated. The mythological ideas which still lingered behind were diffused in a multitude of popular works. In the travels of Sir John Mandeville, there are many allusions to ancient fable; and, as Middleton has shown that a great number of the Popish rites were derived from Pagan ceremonies, it is scarcely to be doubted, that many classical were converted into romantic fictions. This at least is certain, that the classical system presents the most numerous and least exceptionable prototypes of the fables of romance.

'In many of the tales of chivalry, there is a knight detained from his guest, by the enticements of a sorceress; and who is nothing more than the Calypso or Circe of Homer. The story of Andromeda might give rise to the fable of damsels being rescued by their favourite knight, when on the point of being devoured by a sea monster. The heroes of the Iliad and Eneid were both furnished with enchanted armour; and in the story of Polyphemus, a giant and his cave are exhibited. Herodotus, in his history, speaks of a race of Cyclops who inhabited the North, and waged perpetual war with the tribe of Griffons, which was in possession of mines of gold. The expedition of Jason in search of the golden fleece; the apples of the Hesperides, watched by a dragon; the king's daughter who is an enchantress, who falls in love with and saves the knight,—are akin to the marvels of romantic fiction—especially of that sort supposed to have been introduced by the Arabians. Some of the less familiar fables of classical mythology, as the image in the Theogony of Hesiod, of the murky prisons in which the Titans were pent up by Jupiter, under the custody of strong armed giants, bear a striking resemblance to the more wild sublimity of the Gothic fictions.' (Vol. I. p. 135.)

Thus Bayes is not the only poet whose invention is indebted to his memory or commonplace book; and the art of fictitious narrative, like every other art, seems to have arisen gradually from very humble beginnings; and to have consisted, at first, not in the invention of incidents, but in the exaggeration, natural even to eyewitnesses, in relating any interesting or surprising event; and afterwards, in borrowing incidents, true or false, from every quarter, whenever such a license had the chance of escaping detection, or of being favourably received.

But the licence, whether of exaggerating, of borrowing, or of inventing incidents, would be more freely assumed by the bard, and

more indulgently admitted by his audience; and indeed the reports of travellers, who have always enjoyed a peculiar privilege, would provide the materials of fiction in greater variety, and of a more wonderful kind, when the scene of the hero's adventures happened to be in distant and unknown regions, inhabited by other races of men, enclosed by other mountains and other seas, subject to the influence of other skies, and governed by other gods and another order of Nature.—The Odyssey is a curious example.—If we except the usual interposition of the usual deities, the history of what passes in Ithaca and Greece seems to contain little which may not be more easily conceived to have actually happened, than to have been invented by the poet. But when we accompany Ulysses to Italy, Sicily and Ogygia, countries so little known in those early times to the inhabitants of Ionia or Greece, we find ourselves in another world. We meet with the enchantments of Circe, the mother of a large family of enchantresses; and the songs of Sirens—whose fascinating progeny has multiplied still more extensively both in verse and in prose. We meet with Giants who devoured human flesh, and are manifestly near of kin to the raw-boned gentlemen against whom not only the knights-errant of after-times, but also our dearly beloved schoolfellow Jack the Giant-killer exerted his prowess and sagacity—though we have some pleasure in remarking that the more modern giants are of a finer breed, and farther removed from the savage state, as they look through two eyes instead of one, and live in castles instead of caves. What is more wonderful, we meet with the road to hell; not indeed the broad way through the wide gate, so well known and so much frequented by men of all ranks in every age of the world; but the secret path which it requires mystic rites to open, and by which a hero, a saint, or a poet, with a proper guide and good interest at court, may not only descend with all his flesh and blood about him to gratify his curiosity, but also return safe and sound, to entertain his friends above ground with the sights he saw below.

It appears, then, in what manner the bards, prompted by patriotism, and the desire of exciting the wonder of their auditors, might be enabled, without any great trouble of invention, to adorn with fiction the songs which recorded the exploits of their own countrymen; and their freedom in this respect would be the greater, according to the distance of time or place. But all restraint would be removed, when the hero of the tale was a foreigner. The historical truth would in this case be indifferent to the audience, and the narrative would be more acceptable, according as it was more extraordinary, affecting, and miraculous. Now it is obvious, that as the bards were indebted to their powers of amusing company for their estimation in society,

and even for their livelihood, they would be prompted, by vanity and interest, as well as by their genius and habits, to provide an ample store and variety of tales; and not to confine themselves to transactions where they must have been fettered by the national records or traditions, but to adopt also those other subjects, where they could employ without controul all the materials which were furnished by their experience, memory or fancy. It is obvious, too, that recourse to foreign subjects would become the more frequent, according as the nation advanced in knowledge and refinement, and ceased to depend on their poets for the preservation of their history. And when the professions of the poets and historians were completely separated, the former would be fully and for ever invested with the privilege of fiction, the *quidlibet audendi potestas*, in all their narratives, whether of foreign or domestic transactions—subject only to the remonstrances of the critics, not for telling lies, but for telling ill-contrived or uninteresting lies.

We have dwelt the longer on the origin of fictitious narrative, not only because the subject has been strangely misrepresented by the critics, but also because it is entirely overlooked in our author's history. And this oversight seems to have produced another very material defect, the limitation of his plan to fictions *in prose*.

The earliest fictions are obviously entitled to the greatest attention, on account of the information which may be extracted from them with regard to the history, manners, and opinions of the nation and age to which they belong. They are also connected with many of the succeeding fictions; so that, by a mutual comparison, they are all rendered more intelligible and agreeable, more valuable both to the antiquary, the philosopher, and the innocents who read for amusement. But all the early fictions are composed in verse; and after fiction became less connected with history, many of the finest specimens of poetry are also the finest specimens of fictitious narrative. In fact, if we except a very few Italian tales, and some of the first-rate French and English novels, by far the best fictitious narratives in existence are poems. And a history of Mathematics which should exclude Archimedes and Newton, would not be more extraordinary, than a history of Fiction which excludes Homer, Hesiod, Virgil, Lucan, Ariosto, Tasso, Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Scott, Campbell and Byron.

The reason alleged for this exclusion appears to us, we will confess, altogether unsatisfactory.

'The history of Fiction,' says our author in his Introduction, 'becomes in a considerable degree interesting to the philosopher, and occupies an important place in the history of the progress of society.

By contemplating the fables of a people, we have a successive delineation of their prevalent modes of thinking, a picture of their feelings and tastes and habits. In this respect prose fiction appears to possess advantages considerably superior either to history or poetry. In history there is too little individuality; in poetry too much effort, to permit the poet and historian to pourtray the manners living as they rise. History treats of man, as it were, in the mass; and the individuals whom it paints, are regarded merely or principally in a public light, without taking into consideration their private feelings, tastes, or habits. Poetry is in general capable of too little detail, while its paintings at the same time are usually too much forced and exaggerated. But in Fiction we can discriminate without impropriety, and enter into detail without meanness. Hence it has been remarked, that it is chiefly in the fictions of an age that we can discover the modes of living, dress and manners of the period.'

In the two last sentences it is plain that the author means prose fictions, and not fictions in general. But we hope he will consider this matter a little more deliberately. Even though we should grant all that he has here stated, it would not afford a sufficient reason for excluding fictitious narratives in verse from the History of Fiction. But we apprehend that verse is by no means incompatible with accurate and minute description; for which we may appeal to the finest poems that have ever yet been published, as well as to the ruder lays of the bards in the North and West of Europe, which are of such importance both in the history of Fiction, and in the history of Society. Of the manners and characters of the Greek in the heroic ages, we find a distinct and even minute account in the poems of Homer: but it would not be adviseable to form our ideas of the Greek Shepherds and Shepherdesses in any age, from a certain prose romance to which our Author has condescended to afford a conspicuous place in his history—Longus's pastoral tale of Daphnis and Chloe. We doubt much if the manners of chivalry are as correctly represented in the prose of Amadis de Gaul, and the long train of prose romances to which it gave rise, and which occupy so great a portion of the present work; as in the Orlando Furioso and Gerusalemme liberata, under all the fetters of the ottava rima. The voluminous histories of Astrea and Cleopatra, the accomplished Sir Philip Sydney's Arcadia, and various other celebrated romances, which are admitted into our author's history on account of their prose, and which are chiefly deserving of attention, from the difficulty of discovering how any body could ever have been at the trouble to read them, describe a state of society which never existed any where but in the fantastic imaginations of those

writers, who may κατ' ἐξοχήν—be denominated Prosers. On the other hand, the Lady of the Lake, Gertrude of Wyoming, the Bride of Abydos and the Corsair, present in the most harmonious versification and highest colouring of poetry, many details of national manners which are not surpassed in accuracy by the plain prose of that most honest of all travellers, Bell of Antermony. We are far however from wishing to insinuate that any of the prose romances which we have mentioned should be excluded from the History of Fiction. On the contrary we are extremely obliged to Mr. Dunlop for his judicious and elegant accounts of them. But we regret that the mere circumstance of versification should have excluded so many capital or curious works which are essentially connected with a philosophical and critical delineation of the origin and progress of Fiction in general, and particularly in the West of Europe.

The present publication, however, although it ought only to be entitled Sketches of the History of Fiction, is still interesting and amusing, and in general is respectably executed. But we have only to look at the first chapter, in order to be sensible of the imperfection of the plan. This chapter gives a view of the Greek romances in prose, and begins with a work of Antonius Diogenes in the time of Alexander the Great, entitled Accounts of the incredible things in Thule, τῶν ὑπὲρ Θουλην ἀπιστῶν λόγοι. It is now, we believe, extant only in the Epitome of Photius; and is a farrago of absurd and extravagant stories, which its author acknowledges to have been collected from former writers. We mention it only to apprise the reader at how recent a period Mr. Dunlop's history begins. At this period, the art of composition, both in prose and verse, had attained a high degree of excellence; the departments of history and fiction were completely separated,—though some irregular practices have existed, down to our own days, of borrowing the ornaments of the latter department to decorate the former; fiction had been long cultivated on its own account; the tales which delighted the Milesians, and which probably borrowed many of their incidents from the neighbouring and civilised nations of Persia, were then in circulation; and the intercourse which Alexander's expedition had opened with the more easterly nations, must have afforded a copious supply of materials for the story-tellers of Greece. Thus our author's history opens, not in the beginning, but in the midst, of things; an arrangement which, however commendable in an Epic poem, does not appear so well adapted to sober history,—not even to a history of Fiction. Nor does our author, like the Epic poets, fall upon any device for carrying us back in due time to the commencement of the subject; from which indeed he is precluded by the artificial limits of his plan.

Of the Greek Romances in prose, now extant, of any considerable length (if we except the Cyropœdia, which is a fiction of a very particular kind, and not intended for popular amusement), the oldest is not earlier than the end of the fourth century. It is the history of Theagenes and Chariclea, written by Heliodorus, Bishop of Tricca in Thessaly, but before his promotion to the episcopal dignity. It is deserving of notice chiefly on account of the hints which it has furnished to succeeding writers of eminence, particularly to Tasso and Guarini; but we mention it here, chiefly for the purpose of recommending to our author a revisal of the principles of criticism which he has laid down in his remarks on this Romance. To us it appears that a story may possess novelty, probability, and variety in its incidents; that the incidents may be arranged by the narrator, so as to keep us ignorant of the final issue till the last; that it may possess all the ornaments which our author has enumerated—a good style, characters well defined and interesting in themselves, sentiments as sublime as any in Epictetus, and descriptions as fine as in the Romance of the Forest, or as correct as in Bell's Travels; nay, to crown all, we can even conceive that the story shall be written in prose;—and yet, that with all these merits, which are all that our author requires, it shall be a string of events so unimportant or unimpassioned, that a second perusal would be quite insufferable. Have we not seen Mr. Cumberland's novels?

Waiting to be better instructed, we would merely hint at present, that the proper merit of a Romance consists in Interest and Pathos, including in Pathos the ludicrous as well as the serious emotions. A romance is nothing, if it does not preserve alive our anxiety for the fate of the principal characters, with a constant, though varied, agitation of the passions. For this purpose, we must be made to conceive the whole action as passing before us—to hear the conversations of the different persons—to see their demeanours and looks —to enter into their thoughts—and to have each of them as distinctly and individually present to our mind, as the several characters in the Iliad, in Marianne, in Tom Jones, or in Cecilia. When the characters are striking, either by their virtues, vices, or follies—and when our imagination is thus occupied by a succession of scenes in which these qualities are rendered conspicuous, and in which our sympathies and aversions, our admiration and laughter, our joy and sorrow, our hopes and fears, are kept in continual play—we can forgive many improbabilities and even impossibilities in the story,—as is well known to the readers of Homer, Ariosto, and Shakespeare: still less are we displeased with borrowed incidents,—as almost all our dramatic authors can testify. In fact, there is generally but little

merit in the adoption, or even invention of the simple incident, compared to the genius of the poet, the actor, or the painter, who bestows upon it life and passion. Chariclea was appointed by the priest of Apollo to present to Theagenes the lighted torch for kindling the sacrifice in the temple of Delphi. They first saw each other upon this occasion, and became mutually and deeply enamoured. But how feeble is the impression produced by this dry narrative, compared to what we feel at Raphael's glowing picture of the scene, or compared to what we would have felt if Rousseau had described the looks and thoughts of the enraptured lovers!—When they were flying from Delphi to Sicily, their ship was captured by the pirate Charinus, whom Chariclea implored in vain not to separate her from Theagenes. We hear without emotion the general account of the event; but how affecting is it to contemplate, in the picture drawn by the same great master, the attitude and countenance of Chariclea as she is kneeling at the Pirate's feet! And how could Otway have wrung the heart by the dramatic representation of such an interview!

It is amusing to observe, at the end of this chapter, how the author endeavours to persuade himself that his history opens with the origin of fictitious narrative in Greece. After some general remarks on the romances he had been reviewing, he adds, 'In short, these *early* fictions are such as might have been expected at the *first* effort'—as if the romances produced several centuries after the Christian era, or even in the time of Alexander the Great, were the first attempts at fiction in the country of Homer and Hesiod.

In the second chapter, where the author proposes to review the Latin romances, the principal article is the Ass of Apuleius, which, from its great popularity, has been called the Golden Ass. It is an improvement of Lucian's whimsical tale, entitled Lucius; and relates the adventures of the author Apuleius during his transformation into an ass. This misfortune befel him at the house of a female magician in Thessaly with whom he lodged, and whose maidservant at his request had stolen a box of ointment from her mistress, by rubbing himself with which Apuleius expected to be changed into a bird; but as his friend the damsel had by mistake given him a wrong box, he found himself compelled to bray and walk on all fours, instead of whistling and flying in the air. He is informed by her, that the eating of rose leaves is necessary for his restoration to the human form. One should imagine that roses might be found as easily in Thessaly as in this country, where an ass of ordinary observation and address might contrive, without much difficulty, to regale himself with one, if he liked it as well as a thistle—and much

more, if it were an object of as great importance to him as to Apuleius. This poor beast, however, went through many adventures, some to be sure agreeable enough, but in general very unpleasant, before he had it in his power to taste a rose leaf. At last, having one evening escaped from his master, he found unexpectedly the termination of his misfortunes. We shall quote Mr. Dunlop's account of this happy catastrophe.

'He fled unperceived to the fields; and having galloped for three leagues, he came to a retired place on the shore of the sea. The moon which was in full splendour, and the awful silence of the night, inspired him with sentiments of devotion. He purified himself in the manner prescribed by Pythagoras, and addressed a long prayer to the great goddess Isis. In the course of the night she appeared to him in a dream; and after giving a strange account of herself, announced to him the end of his misfortunes; but demanded in return the consecration of his whole life to her service. On awakening, he feels himself confirmed in his resolution of aspiring to a life of virtue. On this change of disposition and conquest over his passions, the author finely represents all nature as assuming a new face of cheerfulness and gaiety. "Tanta hilaritate, praeter peculiarem meam, gestire mihi cuncta videbantur, ut pecua etiam cujuscemodi, et totas domos, et ipsam diem serena facie gaudere sentirem."

'While in this frame of mind, Apuleius perceived an innumerable multitude approaching the shore to celebrate the festival of Isis. Amid the crowd of priests, he remarked the sovereign pontiff, with a crown of roses on his head; and approached to pluck them. The pontiff, yielding to a secret inspiration, held forth the garland. Apuleius resumed his former figure, and the promise of the Goddess was fulfilled. He was then initiated into her rites—returned to Rome, and devoted himself to her service. . . . He was finally invited to a more mystic and solemn initiation by the Goddess herself, who rewarded him for his accumulated piety, by an abundance of temporal blessings.'—Vol. i. p. 114.

This romance has acquired great celebrity, from having been pressed by Warburton into the service of Christianity, in his curious argument for the Divine Legation of Moses—which we trust is defensible upon other grounds. We cannot go so far as the learned prelate; though we think it extremely probable that Apuleius had in view the general idea of representing, on the one hand, by his metamorphosis, the degradation of human nature in consequence of a voluptuous life; and on the other hand, the dignity and happiness of virtue, by his restoration and admission to the mysteries of Isis. The Golden Ass, however, is not calculated to make converts from

pleasure; and is chiefly valuable as a book of amusement, written very agreeably, but not without affectation, and containing some beautiful tales and many diverting incidents.

Of the ancient Latin romances very few are extant; and it is probable that the production of these luxuries was checked in Italy before the end of the fourth century, though the Greek writers continued for nine or ten centuries afterwards to compose tales of various kinds both in prose and verse. But, while the idle people of Constantinople were amusing themselves with their novels, the western provinces of the Roman empire were laid waste by barbarous invaders; and a period of extreme misery was at length succeeded by a new state of society, a new state of government, manners and opinions, very different from that which had been subverted in the west, or from that which subsisted in the refined and effeminate provinces of the east, but far better adapted to rouse the ardour of a poetical imagination. Hence arose a new and remarkable class of fictions,—the fictions of Chivalry, which have so long delighted Britain and France, and Spain and Italy. They are the subject of the third and three following chapters of our Author's history.

It is in this portion of his work, particularly, that we have to lament the unhappy limitation of his plan. The prose romances of Chivalry were produced for the most part by Bayes's most expeditious recipe for original composition, namely, by turning verse into prose, —being extremely diffuse and languid compilations from the early metrical tales; and they are in general of little value to the antiquary, as neither their authors nor their dates can be ascertained. Amadis de Gaul is one of the most celebrated; and yet it remains undetermined whether the work now extant under that title has not been greatly altered from the original; nor can any one tell either who composed the original, or who manufactured the present work, or at what time either the one or the other was written. The early metrical tales are far more deserving of attention as connected with real history; and if we consider the romances of chivalry merely as amusements to the imagination, the subject appears better adapted for verse than for prose. The stately and formal manners of those ages soon grow wearisome in ordinary narrative, and require to be enlivened by the rapidity and brilliancy of poetical description: And who does not feel that the marvellous exploits and supernatural events with which they abound, deserve rather to be sung to the sound of the harp, tabret, cymbal, and all manner of musical instruments, than to be detailed in the sober language of truth, which is absurdly affected by the prose romancers, who generally announce themselves as authentic historians, and rail at the falsehood of their

metrical predecessors? Accordingly it is among the poets that we are to look for the finest specimens of the fictions which we are now considering; and while the romances of Ariosto, and Tasso and Scott, are read again and again by persons of all descriptions, even Mr. Southey's translation of the great Amadis de Gaul, though it is ably executed, and has much improved its original by abridging it, was never popular, and is now almost forgotten.

Our author deviates from his plan so far as to give us a slight notice of a few of the metrical romances which were preserved in the library of M. de St. Palaye, the learned writer of the Memoirs on Chivalry. But with this exception, he gratifies his readers with an account of the prose romances only; of which the most ancient, and perhaps the most curious, are those which relate to the fabulous history of England. Amidst the devastation of the Roman empire in the west, this island suffered far more than its share of the general calamity. The Christian religion, which had been elsewhere not only spared but embraced by the conquerors, was exterminated by the idolatrous and unlettered Saxons who subdued the British province; and if any of the Britons were suffered to exist within its bounds, they were only poor despised stragglers of the lower orders; while the remnant of its chiefs, clergy and bards—its traditions, its records, its literature, its very language—were swept into the mountains of Wales, or beyond the sea into Britany. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the history of England should be lost in fable, from the time that the Saxons got a footing in it, about the middle of the fifth century, till the year 600, in which they began to be converted, and civilized, and instructed in letters, by Augustine and the other missionaries of Pope Gregory the Great. This dark period of 150 years, between the entrance of the Saxons under Hengist, and their conversion to Christianity, was the age of the famous King Arthur, his friend Merlin the Enchanter, and the Knights of his illustrious order of the Round Table, who are the great heroes in the older romances of chivalry. Not that these good people, although they fought stoutly against the invaders, knew any thing about the etiquette and parade of chivalry, which was not instituted as an order till long afterwards: but the romancers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries chose to dress in the fashion of their own times, the characters whom they found in the stories of Wales and Britany, or in the chronicle of Geoffry of Monmouth, who reduced these stories into the form of a regular authentic history, ascending to Brutus the Trojan, generally denominated Le Brut by the French, and Brute by the English poets, who was the great-grandson of Æneas, and the undoubted founder of the British

kingdom;—a fact which is abundantly confirmed, if it needed confirmation, by the name Britain, quasi Brutain, evidently derived from Brutus.

The earliest of the prose romances relating to Arthur, is the history of Merlin the Enchanter, who was the son of a demon and an innocent young lady, and favourite minister of Uter Pendragon, the British king. It was this monarch who instituted at Carduel (Carlisle), the order of the Round Table; at which were seated 50 or 60 of the first nobles of the country, with an empty place always left for the Sangreal. The Sangreal, our readers must know, was the most precious of all the Christian relics: it was the blood which flowed from our Saviour's wounds, preserved in the *hanap* or cup in which he drank with his apostles the night when he was betrayed. This relic was first in the possession of Joseph of Arimathea, by whom it was brought to Britain, and afterwards fell into the hands of king Pecheur, who, by a beautiful ambiguity of the French language, might have received this name either from being a great fisher or a great sinner, or both. His nephew, the redoubted knight Percival, succeeded to his uncle's kingdom and to the possession of the Sangreal; which, at the moment of Percival's death, was in the presence of his attendants carried up into heaven, and has never since been seen or heard of. But to return to the romance of Merlin, which is a favourable specimen of the class to which it belongs—we shall extract the following account from our author's history.

'Soon after this institution (of the Round Table), the king invited all his barons to the celebration of a great festival, which he proposed holding annually at Carduel.

'As the knights had obtained permission from his majesty to bring their ladies along with them, the beautiful Yguerne accompanied her husband, the Duke of Tintadiel, to one of these anniversaries. The king became deeply enamoured of the dutchess, and revealed his passion to Ulsius, one of his counsellors. Yguerne withstood all the inducements which Ulsius held forth to prepossess her in favour of his master; and ultimately disclosed to her husband the attachment and solicitations of the king. On hearing this, the duke instantly withdrew from court with Yguerne, and without taking leave of Uter. The king complained of this want of duty to his council, who decided, that the duke should be summoned to court, and if refractory, should be treated as a rebel. As he refused to obey the citation, the king carried war into the estates of his vassal, and besieged him in the strong castle of Tintadiel, in which he had shut himself up. Yguerne was confined in a fortress at some distance, which was still more secure. During the siege, Ulsius informed his

master that he had been accosted by an old man, who promised to conduct the king to Yguerne, and had offered to meet him for that purpose on the following morning. Uter proceeded with Ulsius to the rendezvous. In an old blind man whom they found at the appointed place, they recognized the enchanter Merlin, who had assumed that appearance. He bestowed on the king the form of the Duke of Tintadiel, while he endowed himself and Ulsius with the figures of his grace's two squires. Fortified by this triple metamorphosis, they proceeded to the residence of Yguerne, who, unconscious of the deceit, received the king as her husband.

'The fraud of Merlin was not detected, and the war continued to be prosecuted by Uter with the utmost vigour. At length the Duke was killed in battle, and the King, by the advice of Merlin, espoused Yguerne. Soon after the marriage she gave birth to Arthur, whom she believed to be the son of her former husband, as Uter had never communicated to her the story of his assumed appearance.

'After the death of Uter, there was an interregnum in England, as it was not known that Arthur was his son. This Prince, however, was at length chosen King, in consequence of having unfixed from a miraculous stone, a sword which two hundred and one of the most valiant barons in the realm had been singly unable to extract. At the beginning of his reign, Arthur was engaged in a civil war; as the mode of his election, however judicious, was disapproved by some of the Barons, and when he had at length overcome his domestic enemies, he had long wars to sustain against the Gauls and Saxons.

'In all these contests, the art of Merlin was of great service to Arthur, as he changed himself into a dwarf, a harp player, or a stag, as the interest of his master required; or at least threw on the bystanders a spell to fascinate their eyes, and cause them to see the thing that was not. On one occasion he made an expedition to Rome, entered the King's palace in the shape of an enormous stag, and in this character delivered a formal harangue, to the utter amazement of one called Julius Cæsar; not the Julius whom the Knight Mars killed in his pavilion, but him whom Gauvaine slew, because he defied King Arthur.

'At length this renowned magician disappeared entirely from England. His voice alone was heard in a forest, where he was enclosed in a bush of hawthorn: he had been entrapped in this awkward residence by means of a charm he had communicated to his mistress Viviane, who not believing in the spell, had tried it on her lover. The lady was sorry for the accident; but there was no extracting her admirer from his thorny coverture.

'The earliest edition of this romance was printed at Paris, in three volumes folio, 1498. . . . Though seldom to be met with, the Roman de Merlin is one of the most curious romances of the class to which it belongs. It comprehends all the events connected with the life of the enchanter, from his supernatural birth to his magical disappearance, and embraces a longer period of interesting fabulous history than most of the works of chivalry. . . . The language, which is very old French, is remarkable for its beauty and simplicity. Indeed the work bears everywhere the marks of very high antiquity—though it is impossible to fix the date of its composition: It has been attributed to Robert de Borron, to whom many other works of this nature have been assigned; but it is not known at what time this author existed; and indeed he is believed by many, and particularly by Mr. Ritson, to be entirely a fictitious personage' (vol. i. p. 178).

Our author has given an amusing enough account, not only of the various prose romances relating to chivalry, but also of those circumstances in the state of the western nations which gave rise to the singular institutions and manners of that proud order, and consequently to this particular species of fiction; and we are moreover instructed in the origin of the marvels with which these fictions abound. The subject has been treated so ably, and in such detail, by former writers, that little new is to be expected; but we have already had occasion to commend our author's judgment,—who has not confined himself to any one of the theories which have been ingeniously and learnedly maintained on the topic last mentioned, but has shown that they are all founded on truth, and consistent with each other.

We shall now refer the reader to the work itself, of which we have produced abundant specimens. Its multifarious nature is indicated by the title-page; and it contains much curious information, both with regard to the particular romances which are reviewed, and also with regard to the transition of stories from age to age, and from the novelist to the dramatic poet. But we cannot dismiss the subject, without stating briefly one or two additional remarks, which we submit to our author's consideration in the view of another edition.

It is a material defect that his Reviews are so general, and so uniform in their style, that although we are amused with their pleasantry, they enable us to form but a very imperfect idea of the original compositions. The abridgments of some of the narratives are extremely jejune; and although he has inserted in the Appendix to the first volume some curious passages from the old French romances, and has even been so obliging as to furnish a specimen of

John Bunyan's style in the Pilgrim's Progress, and of Mrs. Radcliffe's in the Romance of the Forest, these favoured writers are almost the only ones whom he allows to address us in their own persons. Now it is obvious, that even the detail of all the incidents in a romance would be a very insufficient ground for judging of its merit. If the narrative is not animated, interesting, and impassioned, it is deficient in the essential requisites. But it is Mr. Dunlop who tells all the stories; and he tells them in his own way. He tells them indeed agreeably, and in many cases, we believe, more agreeably than the authors. This, however, is not precisely the entertainment to which we understood ourselves to have been invited. At another time we shall be happy to listen to Mr. Dunlop's uninterrupted lecture; but on this occasion we expected that he was to introduce us to a great company of literati,—that he was to show them off and draw them out: Yet though they are all eager to talk,—being indeed all of them professed story-tellers, he talks the whole talk himself, and allows very few of the poor gentlemen to put in a word. It is true that he is doing the honours, and consequently we expect that he should prepare us in every case for what we are to hear; but still he should have let the good people speak a little for themselves, and then we might have formed some guess of their mettle. Mr. Ellis has managed this matter better in his specimens of the early metrical romances.

We must likewise observe, that our author is not always sufficiently attentive to make his criticisms intelligible to those who are not acquainted with the original works. Thus, after giving us an outline of the Greek story of Clitophon and Leucippe, he remarks (Vol. i. p. 38) that a number of the incidents are original (how does he know that?) and well imagined; 'such as the beautiful incident of the Bee, which has been adopted by Tasso and D'Urfé:' of which mysterious bee we do not hear another syllable either before or afterwards.

The state of Fiction in modern times is by far the finest and most interesting part of the whole subject; but our author's account of it is extremely imperfect indeed, and seems to have been got up in very great haste, that the contents of his chapters might have some correspondence with his title-page. In fact, it is so inferior to what he has shown himself capable of accomplishing, that it would not be fair to advert to it more particularly.—There is however one incidental circumstance which we cannot omit. Miss Burney is mentioned, only to suggest that both the general incidents and the leading characters in Evelina have been derived from Mrs. Heywood's stupid history of Betsy Thoughtless. This is really too much in the style

of the schoolboy critics,—who make a prodigious noise about originality and invention, without attending to what constitutes the real value of works addressed to the imagination. Does it derogate from Shakespeare's genius, that his fables are not his own? Or does any person now suppose that Homer invented, or would it have been much to his credit if he had invented, the story of the Trojan war, or even the principal events in his immortal poems? We will not however resume this topic, which we had already occasion to consider; but only observe, that from whatever quarter the author of Evelina may have derived the hints of her stories and characters, there are but few novelists who deserve to be compared to her in the capital merit of a powerful dramatic effect.

We shall conclude with merely suggesting that our author's history would be greatly improved if he were careful to trace the connexion between the variations in the popular fictions of the western nations of Europe, and the variations in the political, moral, religious and literary state of those nations since the first establishment of the feudal governments. There are not wanting materials and helps for such an investigation; and as Mr. Dunlop is a man of erudition and research, we have no doubt that he would find it an interesting amusement for his leisure hours.

Upon the whole, though we wish to see the History of Fiction executed on a very different plan, and with a greater spirit of philosophical inquiry and critical acuteness, we recommend the present publication as an agreeable and curious Miscellany, which discovers uncommon information and learning.

STANDARD NOVELS AND ROMANCES

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There is an exclamation in one of Gray's letters—'Be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon!' If we did not utter a similar aspiration at the conclusion of the Wanderer, it was not from any want of affection for the class of writing to which it belongs; for, without going quite so far as the celebrated French philosopher, who thought that more was to be learnt from good novels and romances, than from the gravest treatises on history and morality, we must confess, that there are few works to which we oftener turn for profit or delight, than to the standard productions in this species of composition. With the exception of the violently satirical, and the violently sentimental specimens of the art, we find

there the closest imitation of men and manners; and are admitted to examine the very web and texture of society, as it really exists, and as we meet with it when we come into the world. If the style of poetry has 'something more divine in it,' this savours more of humanity. We are brought acquainted with an infinite variety of characters—all a little more amusing, and, for the greater part, more true to general nature than those which we meet with in actual life—and have our moral impressions far more frequently called out, and our moral judgments exercised, than in the busiest career of existence. As a record of past manners and opinions, too, such writings afford both more minute and more abundant information than any other. To give one example only:—We should really be at a loss where to find, in any authentic documents of the same period, so satisfactory an account of the general state of society, and of moral, political and religious feeling, in the reign of George II. as we meet with in the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his friend Mr. Abraham Adams. This work, indeed, we take to be a perfect piece of statistics in its kind; and do not know from what other quarter we could have acquired the solid information it contains, even as to this comparatively recent period. What a thing it would be to have such a work of the age of Pericles or Alexander! and how much more would it teach us as to the true character and condition of the people among whom it was produced, than all the tragedies and histories, and odes and orations, that have been preserved of their manufacture! In looking into such grave and ostentatious performances, we see little but the rigid skeleton of public transactions—exaggerations of party zeal, and vestiges of literary ambition; and if we wish really to know what was the state of manners and of morals, and in what way, and into what forms, principles and institutions were actually moulded in practice, we cannot do better than refer to the works of those writers, who, having no other object than to imitate nature, could only hope for success from the fidelity of their pictures; and were bound (in their own defence) to reduce the boasts of vague theorists, and the exaggerations of angry disputants, to the mortifying standard of reality.

We will here confess however, that we are a little prejudiced on the point in question; and that the effect of many fine speculations has been lost upon us, from an early familiarity with the most striking passages in the little work to which we have just alluded. Thus, nothing can be more captivating than the description somewhere given by Mr. Burke, of the indissoluble connexion between learning and nobility; and of the respect universally paid by wealth to piety and morals. But the effect of this splendid representation

has always been spoiled to us, by our recollection of Parson Adams sitting over his cup of ale in Sir Thomas Booby's kitchen. Echard 'on the Contempt of the Clergy,' in like manner, is certainly a very good book, and its general doctrine more just and reasonable; but an unlucky impression of the reality of Parson Trulliber always checks, in us, the respectful emotions to which it should give rise: while the lecture which Lady Booby reads to Lawyer Scout on the expulsion of Joseph and Fanny from the parish, casts an unhappy shade over the splendid pictures of practical jurisprudence that are to be found in the works of Blackstone or De Lolme. The most moral writers, after all, are those who do not pretend to inculcate any moral: The professed moralist almost unavoidably degenerates into the partisan of a system; and the philosopher warps the evidence to his own purpose. But the painter of manners gives the facts of human nature, and leaves us to draw the inference: If we are not able to do this, or do it ill, at least it is our own fault.

The first-rate writers in this class are of course few; but those few we may reckon, without scruple, among the greatest ornaments and the best benefactors of our kind. There is a certain set of them, who, as it were, take their rank by the side of reality, and are appealed to as evidence on all questions concerning human nature. The principal of these are Cervantes and Le Sage; and, among ourselves, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Sterne.[1] As this is a department of criticism which deserves more attention than we have ever yet bestowed on it, we shall venture to treat it a little in detail; and endeavour to contribute something towards settling the standard of excellence, both as to degree and kind, in these several writers.

We shall begin with the renowned history of Don Quixote; who always presents something more stately, more romantic, and at the same time more real to our imagination, than any other hero upon record. His lineaments, his accoutrements, his pasteboard visor, are familiar to us, as the recollections of our early home. The spare and upright figure of the hero paces distinctly before our eyes; and Mambrino's helmet still glitters in the sun! We not only feel the greatest love and veneration for the knight himself, but a certain respect for all those connected with him—the Curate, and Master Nicolas the barber—Sancho and Dapple—and even for Rosinante's leanness and his errors! Perhaps there is no work which combines so much originality with such an air of truth. Its popularity is

[1] We have not forgotten De Foe as one of our own writers. The author of Robinson Crusoe was an Englishman; and one of those Englishmen who make us proud of the name.

almost unexampled; and yet its real merits have not been sufficiently understood. The story is the least part of them; though the blunders of Sancho, and the unlucky adventures of his master, are what naturally catch the attention of ordinary readers. The pathos and dignity of the sentiments are often disguised under the ludicrousness of the subject; and provoke laughter when they might well draw tears. The character of Don Quixote itself is one of the most perfect disinterestedness. He is an enthusiast of the most amiable kind—of a nature equally open, gentle and generous; a lover of truth and justice, and one who had brooded over the fine dreams of chivalry and romance, till the dazzling visions cheated his brain into a belief of their reality. There cannot, in our opinion, be a greater mistake than to consider Don Quixote as a merely satirical work, or an attempt to explode, by coarse raillery, 'the long forgotten order of chivalry.' There could be no need to explode what no longer existed. Besides, Cervantes himself was a man of the most sanguine and enthusiastic temperament; and even through the crazed and battered figure of the knight, the spirit of chivalry shines out with undiminished lustre; and one might almost imagine that the author had half-designed to revive the example of past ages, and once more 'witch the world with noble horsemanship'; and had veiled the design, in scorn of the degenerate age to which it was addressed, under this fantastic and imperfect disguise of romantic and ludicrous exaggeration. However that may be, the spirit which the book breathes, to those who relish and understand it best, is unquestionably the spirit of chivalry: nor perhaps is it too much to say, that, if ever the flame of Spanish liberty is destined to break forth, wrapping the tyrant and the tyranny in one consuming blaze, it is owing to Cervantes and his knight of La Mancha, that the spark of generous sentiment and romantic enterprise from which it must be kindled, has not been quite extinguished.

The character of Sancho is not more admirable in the execution, than in the conception, as a relief to that of the knight. The contrast is as picturesque and striking as that between the figures of Rosinante and Dapple. Never was there so complete a *partie quarrée*;—they answer to one another at all points. Nothing can surpass the truth of physiognomy in the description of the master and man, both as to body and mind;—the one lean and tall, the other round and short;—the one heroical and courteous, the other selfish and servile;—the one full of high-flown fancies, the other a bag of proverbs;—the one always starting some romantic scheme, the other always keeping to the safe side of tradition and custom. The gradual ascendancy, too, obtained by Don Quixote over Sancho,

is as finely managed as it is characteristic. Credulity, and a love of the marvellous, are as natural to ignorance as selfishness and cunning. Sancho by degrees becomes a kind of lay-brother of the order; acquires a taste for adventures in his own way, and is made all but an entire convert, by the discovery of the hundred crowns in one of his most comfortless journeys. Towards the end, his regret at being forced to give up the pursuit of knight-errantry, almost equals his master's; and he seizes the proposal of Don Quixote to turn shepherds, with the greatest avidity,—still applying it, however, in his own fashion; for while the Don is ingeniously torturing the names of his humble acquaintance into classical terminations, and contriving scenes of gallantry and song, Sancho exclaims, 'Oh, what delicate wooden spoons shall I carve! what crumbs and cream shall I devour!' —forgetting, in his milk and fruits, the pullets and geese at Camacho's wedding.

This intuitive perception of the hidden analogies of things, or, as it may be called, this *instinct of imagination*, is what stamps the character of genius on the productions of art, more than any other circumstance: for it works unconsciously, like nature, and receives its impressions from a kind of inspiration. There is more of this unconscious power in Cervantes, than in any other author, except Shakespeare. Something of the same kind extends itself to all the subordinate parts and characters of the work. Thus we find the curate confidentially informing Don Quixote, that if he could get the ear of the government, he has something of considerable importance to propose for the good of the state; and the knight afterwards meets with a young gentleman, who is a candidate for poetical honours, with a mad lover, a forsaken damsel, &c.—all delineated with the same inimitable force, freedom, and fancy. The whole work breathes that air of romance,—that aspiration after imaginary good,—that longing after something more than we possess, that in all places, and in all conditions of life,

> ——— 'still prompts the eternal sigh,
> For which we wish to live, or dare to die!'

The characters in Don Quixote are strictly individuals; that is, they do not belong to, but form a class of themselves. In other words, the actions and manners of the chief *dramatis personæ* do not arise out of the actions and manners of those around them, or the condition of life in which they are placed, but out of the peculiar dispositions of the persons themselves, operated upon by certain impulses of imagination and accident: Yet these impulses are so true to nature, and their operation so truly described, that we not only

recognize the fidelity of the representation, but recognize it with all the advantages of novelty superadded. They are unlike any thing we have actually seen—may be said to be purely ideal—and yet familiarize themselves more readily with our imagination, and are retained more strongly in memory, than perhaps any others: —they are never lost in the crowd. One test of the truth of this ideal painting, is the number of allusions which Don Quixote has furnished to the whole of civilized Europe—that is to say of appropriate cases, and striking illustrations of the universal principles of our nature. The common incidents and descriptions of human life are, however, quite familiar and natural; and we have nearly the same insight given us here, into the characters of inn-keepers, barmaids, ostlers, and puppet-show men, as in Fielding himself. There is a much greater mixture, however, of sentiment with *naïveté*, of the pathetic with the quaint and humorous, than there ever is in Fielding. We might instance the story of the country man, whom Don Quixote and Sancho met in their search after Dulcinea, driving his mules to plough at break of day, and 'singing the ancient ballad of Roncesvalles!' The episodes which are introduced, are excellent; but have, upon the whole, been overrated. Compared with the serious tales in Boccacio, they are trifling. That of Marcella, the fair shepherdess, is the best. We will only add, that Don Quixote is an entirely original work in its kind, and that the author has the highest honour which can belong to one, that of being the founder of a new style of writing.

There is another Spanish novel, Gusman d'Alfarache, nearly of the same age as Don Quixote, and of great genius, though it can hardly be ranked as a novel, or a work of imagination. It is a series of strange adventures, rather drily told, but accompanied by the most severe and sarcastic commentary. The satire, the wit, the eloquence, and reasoning, are of the most powerful kind; but they are didactic, rather than dramatic. They would suit a sermon or a pasquinade better than a romance. Still there are in this extraordinary book, occasional sketches of character, and humorous descriptions, to which it would be difficult to produce any thing superior. This work, which is hardly known in this country except by name, has the credit, without any reason, of being the original of Gil Blas. There is only one incident the same, that of the supper at the inn. In all other respects, these two works are the very reverse of each other, both in their excellencies and defects.

Gil Blas is, next to Don Quixote, more generally read and admired than any other novel—and, in one sense, deservedly so: for it is at the head of its class, though that class is very different from,

and inferior to the other. There is very little individual character in Gil Blas. The author is a describer of manners, and not of character. He does not take the elements of human nature, and work them up into new combinations, (which is the excellence of Don Quixote); nor trace the peculiar and striking combinations of folly and knavery as they are to be found in real life, (like Fielding); but he takes off, as it were, the general, habitual impression, which circumstances make on certain conditions of life, and moulds all his characters accordingly. All the persons whom he introduces, carry about with them the badge of their profession; and you see little more of them than their costume. He describes men as belonging to certain classes in society—the highest, generally, and the lowest, and such as are found in great cities—not as they are in themselves, or with the individual differences which are always to be found in nature. His hero, in particular, has no character but that of the accidental circumstances in which he is placed. His priests are only described as priests: his valets, his players, his women, his courtiers and his sharpers, are all the same. Nothing can well exceed the monotony of the work in this respect;—at the same time that nothing can exceed the truth and precision with which the general manners of these different characters are preserved, nor the felicity of the particular traits by which their leading foibles are brought out to notice. Thus, the Archbishop of Grenada will remain an everlasting memento of the weakness of human vanity; and the account of Gil Blas's legacy, of the uncertainty of human expectations. This novel is as deficient in the fable as in the characters. It is not a regularly constructed story; but a series of adventures told with equal gaiety and good sense, and in the most graceful style possible.

It has been usual to class our great novelists as imitators of one or other of these two writers. Fielding, no doubt, is more like Don Quixote than Gil Blas; Smollet is more like Gil Blas than Don Quixote: but there is not much resemblance in either case. Sterne's Tristram Shandy is a more direct instance of imitation. Richardson can scarcely be called an imitator of any one; or, if he is, it is of the sentimental refinement of Marivaux, or the verbose gallantry of the writers of the seventeenth century.

There is very little to warrant the common idea, that Fielding was an imitator of Cervantes,—except his own declaration of such an intention, in the title-page of Joseph Andrews,—the romantic turn of the character of Parson Adams (the only romantic character in his works),—and the proverbial humour of Partridge, which is kept up only for a few pages. Fielding's novels are, in general, thoroughly his own; and they are thoroughly English. What they are most

remarkable for, is neither sentiment, nor imagination, nor wit, nor humour, though there is a great deal of this last quality; but profound knowledge of human nature—at least of English nature—and masterly pictures of the characters of men as he saw them existing. This quality distinguishes all his works, and is shown almost equally in all of them. As a painter of real life, he was equal to Hogarth: As a mere observer of human nature, he was little inferior to Shakespeare, though without any of the genius and poetical qualities of his mind.—His humour is less rich and laughable than Smollett's; his wit as often misses as hits;—he has none of the fine pathos of Richardson or Sterne:—But he has brought together a greater variety of characters in common life,—marked with more distinct peculiarities, and without an atom of caricature, than any other novel writer whatever. The extreme subtility of observation on the springs of human conduct in ordinary characters, is only equalled by the ingenuity of contrivance in bringing those springs into play in such a manner as to lay open their smallest irregularity. The detection is always complete—and made with the certainty and skill of a philosophical experiment, and the ease and simplicity of a casual observation. The truth of the imitation is indeed so great, that it has been argued that Fielding must have had his materials ready-made to his hands, and was merely a transcriber of local manners and individual habits. For this conjecture, however, there seems to be no foundation. His representations, it is true, are local and individual; but they are not the less profound and natural. The feeling of the general principles of human nature operating in particular circumstances, is always intense, and uppermost in his mind: and he makes use of incident and situation, only to bring out character.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to give any illustration of these remarks. Tom Jones is full of them. The moral of this book has been objected to, and not altogether without reason—but a more serious objection has been made to the want of refinement and elegance in the two principal characters. We never feel this objection, indeed, while we are reading the book: but at other times, we have something like a lurking suspicion that Jones was but an awkward fellow, and Sophia a pretty simpleton. We do not know how to account for this effect, unless it is that Fielding's constantly assuring us of the beauty of his hero, and the good sense of his heroine, at last produces a distrust of both. The story of Tom Jones is allowed to be unrivalled: and it is this circumstance, together with the vast variety of characters, that has given the history of a Foundling so decided a preference over Fielding's other novels. The characters themselves, both in Amelia and Joseph Andrews, are quite

equal to any of those in Tom Jones. The account of Miss Mathews and Ensign Hibbert—the way in which that lady reconciles herself to the death of her father—the inflexible Colonel Bath, the insipid Mrs. James, the complaisant Colonel Trent—the demure, sly, intriguing, equivocal Mrs. Bennet—the lord who is her seducer, and who attempts afterwards to seduce Amelia by the same mechanical process of a concert-ticket, a book, and the disguise of a great-coat—his little fat short-nosed, red-faced, good-humoured accomplice the keeper of the lodging-house, who having no pretensions to gallantry herself, has a disinterested delight in forwarding the intrigues and pleasures of others, (to say nothing of honest Atkinson, the story of the miniature-picture of Amelia, and the hashed mutton, which are in a different style), are master-pieces of description. The whole scene at the lodging-house, the masquerade, &c. in Amelia, is equal in interest to the parallel scenes in Tom Jones, and even more refined in the knowledge of character. For instance, Mrs. Bennet is superior to Mrs. Fitzpatrick in her own way. The uncertainty in which the event of her interview with her former seducer is left, is admirable. Fielding was a master of what may be called the *double entendre* of character, and surprises you no less by what he leaves in the dark, (hardly known to the persons themselves), than by the unexpected discoveries he makes of the real traits and circumstances in a character with which, till then, you find you were unacquainted. There is nothing at all heroic, however, in the style of any of his delineations. He never draws lofty characters or strong passions;—all his persons are of the ordinary stature as to intellect; and none of them trespass on the angelic nature, by elevation of fancy, or energy of purpose. Perhaps, after all, Parson Adams is his finest character. It is equally true to nature, and more ideal than any of the others. Its unsuspecting simplicity makes it not only more amiable, but doubly amusing, by gratifying the sense of superior sagacity in the reader. Our laughing at him does not once lessen our respect for him. His declaring that he would willingly walk ten miles to fetch his sermon on vanity, merely to convince Wilson of his thorough contempt of this vice, and his consoling himself for the loss of his Æschylus, by suddenly recollecting that he could not read it if he had it, because it is dark, are among the finest touches of *naïveté*. The night-adventures at Lady Booby's with Beau Didapper, and the amiable Slipslop, are the most ludicrous; and that with the huntsman, who draws off the hounds from the poor Parson, because they would be spoiled by following *vermin*, the most profound. Fielding did not often repeat himself: but Dr. Harrison, in Amelia, may be considered as a variation of the character of Adams: so also is Goldsmith's Vicar of

Wakefield; and the latter part of that work, which sets out so delightfully, an almost entire plagiarism from Wilson's account of himself, and Adams's domestic history.

Smollett's first novel, Roderick Random, which is also his best, appeared about the same time as Fielding's Tom Jones; and yet it has a much more modern air with it: But this may be accounted for, from the circumstance that Smollett was quite a young man at the time, whereas Fielding's manner must have been formed long before. The style of Roderick Random, though more scholastic and elaborate, is stronger and more pointed than that of Tom Jones; the incidents follow one another more rapidly, (though it must be confessed they never come in such a throng, or are brought out with the same dramatic facility); the humour is broader, and as effectual; and there is very nearly, if not quite, an equal interest excited by the story. What then is it that gives the superiority to Fielding? It is the superior insight into the springs of human character, and the constant development of that character through every change of circumstance. Smollett's humour often arises from the situation of the persons, or the peculiarity of their external appearance, as, from Roderick Random's carrotty locks, which hung down over his shoulders like a pound of candles, or Strap's ignorance of London, and the blunders that follow from it. There is a tone of vulgarity about all his productions. The incidents frequently resemble detached anecdotes taken from a newspaper or magazine; and, like those in Gil Blas, might happen to a hundred other characters. He exhibits only the external accidents and reverses to which human life is liable—not 'the stuff' of which it is composed. He seldom probes to the quick, or penetrates beyond the surface of his characters: and therefore he leaves no stings in the minds of his readers, and in this respect is far less interesting than Fielding. His novels always enliven, and never tire us: we take them up with pleasure, and lay them down without any strong feeling of regret. We look on and laugh, as spectators of an amusing though inelegant scene, without closing in with the combatants, or being made parties in the event. We read Roderick Random as an entertaining story; for the particular accidents and modes of life which it describes, have ceased to exist: but we regard Tom Jones as a real history; because the author never stops short of those essential principles which lie at the bottom of all our actions, and in which we feel an immediate interest; —*intus et in cute.*—Smollett excels most as the lively caricaturist: Fielding as the exact painter and profound metaphysician. We are far from maintaining, that this account applies uniformly to the productions of these two writers; but we think that, as far as they

essentially differ, what we have stated is the general distinction between them. Roderick Random is the purest of Smollett's novels; we mean in point of style and description. Most of the incidents and characters are supposed to have been taken from the events of his own life; and are therefore truer to nature. There is a rude conception of generosity in some of his characters, of which Fielding seems to have been incapable; his amiable persons being merely good-natured. It is owing to this, we think, that Strap is superior to Partridge; and there is a heartiness and warmth of feeling in some of the scenes between Lieutenant Bowling and his nephew, which is beyond Fielding's power of impassioned writing. The whole of the scene on ship-board is a most admirable and striking picture, and, we imagine, very little, if at all exaggerated, though the interest it excites is of a very unpleasant kind. The picture of the little profligate French friar, who was Roderick's travelling companion, and of whom he always kept to the windward, is one of Smollett's most masterly sketches. Peregrine Pickle is no great favourite of ours, and Launcelot Greaves was not worthy of the genius of the author.

Humphry Clinker and Count Fathom are both equally admirable in their way. Perhaps the former is the most pleasant gossipping novel that ever was written—that which gives the most pleasure with the least effort to the reader. It is quite as amusing as going the journey could have been, and we have just as good an idea of what happened on the road, as if we had been of the party. Humphry Clinker himself is exquisite; and his sweetheart, Winifred Jenkins, nearly as good. Matthew Bramble, though not altogether original, is excellently supported, and seems to have been the prototype of Sir Anthony Absolute in the Rivals. But Lismahago is the flower of the flock. His tenaciousness in argument is not so delightful as the relaxation of his logical severity, when he finds his fortune mellowing with the wintry smiles of Mrs. Tabitha Bramble. This is the best preserved, and most original of all Smollett's characters. The resemblance of Don Quixote is only just enough to make it interesting to the critical reader, without giving offence to any body else. The indecency and filth in this novel, are what must be allowed to all Smollett's writings. The subject and characters in Count Fathom are, in general, exceedingly disgusting: the story is also spun out to a degree of tediousness in the serious and sentimental parts; but there is more power of writing occasionally shown in it than in any of his works. We need only refer to the fine and bitter irony of the Count's address to the country of his ancestors on landing in England; to the robber-scene in the forest, which has never been surpassed; to

the Parisian swindler, who personates a raw English country squire, (Western is tame in the comparison); and to the story of the seduction in the west of England. We should have some difficulty to point out, in any author, passages written with more force and nature than these.

It is not, in our opinion, a very difficult attempt to class Fielding or Smollett;—the one as an observer of the characters of human life, the other as a describer of its various eccentricities: But it is by no means so easy to dispose of Richardson, who was neither an observer of the one, nor a describer of the other; but who seemed to spin his materials entirely out of his own brain, as if there had been nothing existing in the world beyond the little shop in which he sat writing. There is an artificial reality about his works, which is nowhere to be met with. They have the romantic air of a pure fiction, with the literal minuteness of a common diary. The author had the strangest matter-of-fact imagination that ever existed, and wrote the oddest mixture of poetry and prose. He does not appear to have taken advantage of any thing in actual nature, from one end of his works to the other: and yet, throughout all his works (voluminous as they are—and this, to be sure, is one reason why they are so), he sets about describing every object and transaction, as if the whole had been given in on evidence by an eyewitness. This kind of high finishing from imagination is an anomaly in the history of human genius; and certainly nothing so fine was ever produced by the same accumulation of minute parts. There is not the least distraction, the least forgetfulness of the end: every circumstance is made to tell. We cannot agree that this exactness of detail produces heaviness; on the contrary, it gives an appearance of truth, and a positive interest to the story; and we listen with the same attention as we should to the particulars of a confidential communication. We at one time used to think some parts of Sir Charles Grandison rather trifling and tedious, especially the long description of Miss Harriet Byron's wedding clothes, till we met with two young ladies who had severally copied out the whole of that very description for their own private gratification. After this, we could not blame the author.

The effect of reading this work, is like an increase of kindred: you find yourself all of a sudden introduced into the midst of a large family, with aunts and cousins to the third and fourth generation, and grandmothers both by the father's and mother's side,—and a very odd set of people too, but people whose real existence and personal identity you can no more dispute than your own senses,—for you see and hear all that they do or say. What is still more extraordinary, all this extreme elaborateness in working out the story, seems to

have cost the author nothing: for it is said, that the published works are mere abridgments. We have heard (though this, we suppose, must be a pleasant exaggeration), that Sir Charles Grandison was originally written in eight and twenty volumes.

Pamela is the first of his productions, and the very child of his brain. Taking the general idea of the character of a modest and beautiful country girl, and of the situation in which she is placed, he makes out all the rest, even to the smallest circumstance, by the mere force of a reasoning imagination. It would seem as if a step lost would be as fatal here as in a mathematical demonstration. The development of the character is the most simple, and comes the nearest to nature that it can do, without being the same thing. The interest of the story increases with the dawn of understanding and reflection in the heroine. Her sentiments gradually expand themselves, like opening flowers. She writes better every time, and acquires a confidence in herself, just as a girl would do, writing such letters in such circumstances; and yet it is certain *that no girl would write such letters in such circumstances*. What we mean is this. Richardson's nature is always the nature of sentiment and reflection, not of impulse or situation. He furnishes his characters, on every occasion, with the presence of mind of the author. He makes them act, not as they would from the impulse of the moment, but as they might upon reflection, and upon a careful review of every motive and circumstance in their situation. They regularly sit down to write letters: and if the business of life consisted in letter-writing, and was carried on by the post (like a Spanish game at chess), human nature would be what Richardson represents it. All actual objects and feelings are blunted and deadened by being presented through a medium which may be true to reason, but is false in nature. He confounds his own point of view with that of the immediate actors in the scene; and hence presents you with a conventional and factitious nature, instead of that which is real. Dr. Johnson seems to have preferred this truth of reflection to the truth of nature, when he said that there was more knowledge of the human heart in a page of Richardson than in all Fielding. Fielding, however, saw more of the practical results, and understood the principles as well; but he had not the same power of speculating upon their possible results, and combining them in certain ideal forms of passion and imagination, which was Richardson's real excellence.

It must be observed, however, that it is this mutual good understanding, and comparing of notes between the author and the persons he describes; his infinite circumspection, his exact process of ratiocination and calculation, which gives such an appearance of coldness

and formality to most of his charactérs,—which makes prudes of his women, and coxcombs of his men. Every thing is too conscious in his works. Every thing is distinctly brought home to the mind of the actors in the scene, which is a fault undoubtedly: but then, it must be confessed, every thing is brought home in its full force to the mind of the reader also; and we feel the same interest in the story as if it were our own. Can any thing be more beautiful or affecting than Pamela's reproaches to her 'lumpish heart' when she is sent away from her master's at her own request—its lightness, when she is sent for back—the joy which the conviction of the sincerity of his love diffuses in her heart, like the coming-on of spring—the artifice of the stuff gown—the meeting with lady Davers after her marriage —and the trial scene with her husband? Who ever remained insensible to the passion of Lady Clementina, except Sir Charles Grandison himself, who was the object of it? Clarissa is, however, his masterpiece, if we except Lovelace. If she is fine in herself, she is still finer in his account of her. With that foil, her purity is dazzling indeed: and she who could triumph by her virtue, and the force of her love, over the regality of Lovelace's mind, his wit, his person, his accomplishments and his spirit, conquers all hearts. We should suppose that never sympathy more deep or sincere was excited than by the heroine of Richardson's romance, except by the calamities of real life. The links in this wonderful chain of interest are not more finely wrought, than their whole weight is overwhelming and irresistible. Who can forget the exquisite gradations of her long dying scene, or the closing of the coffin-lid, when Miss Howe comes to take her last leave of her friend; or the heart-breaking reflection that Clarissa makes on what was to have been her wedding-day? Well does a modern writer exclaim—

> 'Books are a real world, both pure and good,
> Round which, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
> Our pastime and our happiness may grow!'

Richardson's wit was unlike that of any other writer;—his humour was so too. Both were the effect of intense activity of mind;—laboured, and yet completely effectual. We might refer to Lovelace's reception and description of Hickman, when he calls out Death in his ear, as the name of the person with whom Clarissa had fallen in love; and to the scene at the glove shop. What can be more magnificent than his enumeration of his companions—'Belton so pert and so pimply—Tourville so fair and so foppish,' etc.? In casuistry, he is quite at home; and, with a boldness greater even than his puritanical severity, has exhausted every topic on virtue and

vice. There is another peculiarity in Richardson, not perhaps so uncommon, which is, his systematically preferring his most insipid characters to his finest, though both were equally his own invention, and he must be supposed to have understood something of their qualities. Thus he preferred the little, selfish, affected, insignificant Miss Byron, to the divine Clementina; and again, Sir Charles Grandison, to the nobler Lovelace. We have nothing to say in favour of Lovelace's morality; but Sir Charles is the prince of coxcombs,—whose eye was never once taken from his own person, and his own virtues; and there is nothing which excites so little sympathy as his excessive egotism.

It remains to speak of Sterne;—and we shall do it in few words. There is more of *mannerism* and affectation in him, and a more immediate reference to preceding authors;—but his excellencies, where he is excellent, are of the first order. His characters are intellectual and inventive, like Richardson's—but totally opposite in the execution. The one are made out by continuity, and patient repetition of touches; the others, by rapid and masterly strokes, and graceful apposition. His style is equally different from Richardson's:—it is at times the most rapid,—the most happy,—the most idiomatic of any of our novel writers. It is the pure essence of English conversational style. His works consist only of *morceaux*,—of brilliant passages. His wit is poignant, though artificial;—and his characters (though the groundwork has been laid before), have yet invaluable original differences;—and the spirit of the execution, the master-strokes constantly thrown into them, are not to be surpassed. It is sufficient to name them—Yorick, Dr. Slop, Mr. Shandy, my Uncle Toby, Trim, Susanna, and the Widow Wadman: and in these he has contrived to oppose, with equal felicity and originality, two characters,—one of pure intellect, and the other of pure good nature, in my Father and my Uncle Toby. There appears to have been in Sterne a vein of dry, sarcastic humour, and of extreme tenderness of feeling;—the latter sometimes carried to affectation, as in the tale of Maria, and the apostrophe to the recording angel;—but at other times pure, and without blemish. The story of Le Febre is perhaps the finest in the English language. My Father's restlessness, both of body and mind, is inimitable. It is the model from which all those despicable performances against modern philosophy ought to have been copied, if their authors had known any thing of the subject they were writing about. My Uncle Toby is one of the finest compliments ever paid to human nature. He is the most unoffending of God's creatures; or, as the French express it—*un tel petit bon homme!* Of his bowling-green,—his sieges,—and his amours, who would say or think any thing amiss?

It is remarkable that our four best novel-writers belong nearly to the same age. We also owe to the same period, (the reign of George II.), the inimitable Hogarth, and some of our best writers of the middle style of comedy. If we were called upon to account for this coincidence, we should wave the consideration of more general causes, (as, that imagination naturally descends with the progress of civilization), and ascribe it at once to the establishment of the Protestant ascendancy, and the succession of the House of Hanover. These great events appear to have given a more popular turn to our literature and genius, as well as to our Government. It was found high time that the people should be represented in books as well as in parliament. They wished to see some account of themselves in what they read, and not to be confined always to the vices, the miseries and frivolities of the great. Our domestic tragedy, and our earliest periodical works, appeared a little before the same period. In despotic countries, human nature is not of sufficient importance to be studied or described. The *canaille* are objects rather of disgust than curiosity; and there are no middle classes. The works of Racine and Moliere are little else than imitations of the verbiage of the court, before which they were represented; or fanciful caricatures of the manners of the lowest of the people. But in the period of our history in question, a security of person and property, and a freedom of opinion had been established, which made every man feel of some consequence to himself, and appear an object of some curiosity to his neighbours; our manners became more domesticated; there was a general spirit of sturdiness and independence, which made the English character more truly English than perhaps at any other period—that is, more tenacious of its own opinions and purposes. The whole surface of society appeared cut out into square enclosures and sharp angles, which extended to the dresses of the time, their gravel walks, and clipped hedges. Each individual had a certain ground-plot of his own to cultivate his particular humours in, and let them shoot out at pleasure; and a most plentiful crop they have produced accordingly.

The reign of George II. was, in a word, in an eminent degree, *the age of hobby-horses*. But since that period, things have taken a different turn. His present Majesty, during almost the whole of his reign, has been constantly mounted on a great War-horse; and has fairly driven all competitors out of the field. Instead of minding our own affairs, or laughing at each other, the eyes of all his faithful subjects have been fixed on the career of the Sovereign, and all hearts anxious for the safety of his person and government. Our pens and our swords have been drawn alike in their defence; and the

returns of killed and wounded, the manufacture of newspapers and parliamentary speeches, have exceeded all former example. If we have had little of the blessings of peace, we have had enough of the glories and calamities of war. His Majesty has indeed contrived to keep alive the greatest public interest ever known, by his determined manner of riding his hobby for half a century together, with the aristocracy—the democracy—the clergy—the landed and monied interest—and the rabble, in full cry after him! and at the end of his career, most happily and unexpectedly succeeded—amidst empires lost and won—kingdoms overturned and created—and the destruction of an incredible number of lives—in restoring *the divine right of Kings*,—and thus preventing any further abuse of the example which seated his family on the throne!

It is not to be wondered, if, amidst the tumult of events crowded into this period, our literature has partaken of the disorder of the time; if our prose has run mad, and our poetry grown childish. Among those few persons who 'have kept the even tenor of their way,' the author of Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla, holds a distinguished place. Mrs. Radcliffe's 'enchantments drear' and moulder-ing castles, derived a part of their interest, we suppose, from the supposed tottering state of all old structures at the time; and Mrs. Inchbald's 'Nature and Art' would not have had the same popularity, but that it fell in (in its two main characters) with the prevailing prejudice of the moment, that judges and bishops were not pure abstractions of justice and piety. Miss Edgeworth's tales, again, are a kind of essence of common sense, which seemed to be called for by the prevailing epidemics of audacious paradox and insane philosophy. The author of the present novel is, however, quite of the old school, a mere common observer of manners,—and also a very woman. It is this last circumstance which forms the peculiarity of her writings, and distinguishes them from those masterpieces which we have before mentioned. She is unquestionably a quick, lively, and accurate observer of persons and things; but she always looks at them with a consciousness of her sex, and in that point of view in which it is the particular business and interest of women to observe them. We thus get a kind of supplement and gloss to our original text, which we could not otherwise have obtained. There is little in her works of passion or character, or even manners, in the most extended sense of the word, as implying the sum-total of our habits and pursuits; her *forte* is in describing the absurdities and affectations of external behaviour, or *the manners of people in company*. Her characters, which are all caricatures, are no doubt distinctly marked, and perfectly kept up; but they are somewhat superficial, and exceedingly

uniform. Her heroes and heroines, almost all of them, depend on the stock of a single phrase or sentiment; or at least have certain mottoes or devices by which they may always be known. They are such characters as people might be supposed to assume for a night at a masquerade. She presents not the whole length figure, nor even the face, but some prominent feature. In the present novel, for example, a lady appears regularly every ten pages, to get a lesson in music for nothing. She never appears for any other purpose; this is all you know of her; and in this the whole wit and humour of the character consists. Meadows is the same, who has always the same cue of being tired, without any other idea, etc. It has been said of Shakespeare, that you may always assign his speeches to the proper characters:—and you may infallibly do the same thing with Madame D'Arblay's; for they always say the same thing. The Branghtons are the best. Mr. Smith is an exquisite city portrait.—Evelina is also her best novel, because it is shortest; that is, it has all the liveliness in the sketches of character, and exquisiteness of comic dialogue and repartee, without the tediousness of the story, and endless affectation of the sentiments.

Women, in general, have a quicker perception of any oddity or singularity of character than men, and are more alive to every absurdity which arises from a violation of the rules of society, or a deviation from established custom. This partly arises from the restraints on their own behaviour, which turn their attention constantly on the subject, and partly from other causes. The surface of their minds, like that of their bodies, seems of a finer texture than ours; more soft, and susceptible of immediate impression. They have less muscular power,—less power of continued voluntary attention,—of reason—passion and imagination: But they are more easily impressed with whatever appeals to their senses or habitual prejudices. The intuitive perception of their minds is less disturbed by any general reasonings on causes or consequences. They learn the idiom of character and manner, as they acquire that of language, by rote merely, without troubling themselves about the principles. Their observation is not the less accurate on that account, as far as it goes; for it has been well said, that 'there is nothing so true as habit.'

There is little other power in Miss Burney's novels, than that of immediate observation: her characters, whether of refinement or vulgarity, are equally superficial and confined. The whole is a question of form, whether that form is adhered to, or violated. It is this circumstance which takes away dignity and interest from her story and sentiments, and makes the one so teazing and tedious, and the other so insipid. The difficulties in which she involves her

heroines are indeed 'Female Difficulties;'—they are difficulties created out of nothing. The author appears to have no other idea of refinement than that it is the reverse of vulgarity; but the reverse of vulgarity is fastidiousness and affectation. There is a true, and a false delicacy. Because a vulgar country Miss would answer 'yes' to a proposal of marriage in the first page, Mad. d'Arblay makes it a proof of an excess of refinement, and an indispensable point of etiquette in her young ladies, to postpone the answer to the end of five volumes, without the smallest reason for their doing so, and with every reason to the contrary. The reader is led every moment to expect a denouement, and is as constantly disappointed on some trifling pretext. The whole artifice of her fable consists in coming to no conclusion. Her ladies stand so upon the order of their going, that they do not go at all. They will not abate an ace of their punctilio in any circumstances, or on any emergency. They would consider it as quite indecorous to run down stairs though the house were in flames, or to move off the pavement though a scaffolding was falling. She has formed to herself an abstract idea of perfection in common behaviour, which is quite as romantic and impracticable as any other idea of the sort: and the consequence has naturally been, that she makes her heroines commit the greatest improprieties and absurdities in order to avoid the smallest. In contradiction to a maxim in philosophy, they constantly act from the weakest motive, or rather from pure affectation.

Thus L. S.—otherwise *Ellis*, in the present novel, actually gives herself up to the power of a man who has just offered violence to her person, rather than return to the asylum of a farm-house, at which she has left some friends, because, as she is turning her steps that way, 'she hears the sounds of rustic festivity and vulgar merriment proceed from it.' That is, in order that her exquisite sensibility may not be shocked by the behaviour of a number of honest country-people making merry at a dance, this model of female delicacy exposes herself to every species of insult and outrage from a man whom she hates. In like manner, she runs from her honourable lover into the power of a ruffian and an assassin, who claims a right over her person by a forced marriage. The whole tissue of the fable is, in short, more wild and chimerical than any thing in Don Quixote, without having any thing of poetical truth or elevation. Madame D'Arblay has woven a web of difficulties for her heroine, something like the green silken threads in which the shepherdess entangled the steed of Cervantes's hero, who swore, in his fine enthusiastic way, that he would sooner cut his passage to another world than disturb the least of those beautiful meshes. The Wanderer raises obstacles,

lighter than 'the gossamer that idles in the wanton summer air,' into insurmountable barriers; and trifles with those that arise out of common sense, reason, and necessity. Her conduct never arises directly out of the circumstances in which she is placed, but out of some factitious and misplaced refinement on them. It is a perpetual game at cross-purposes. There being a plain and strong motive why she should pursue any course of action, is a sufficient reason for her to avoid it; and the perversity of her conduct is in proportion to its levity—as the lightness of the feather baffles the force of the impulse that is given to it, and the slightest breath of air turns it back on the hand from which it is launched. We can hardly consider this as an accurate description of the perfection of the female character!

We are sorry to be compelled to speak so disadvantageously of the work of an excellent and favourite writer; and the more so, as we perceive no decay of talent, but a perversion of it. There is the same admirable spirit in the dialogues, and particularly in the characters of Mrs. Ireton, Sir Jasper Herrington, and Mr. Giles Arbe, as in her former novels. But these do not fill a hundred pages of the work; and there is nothing else good in it. In the story, which here occupies the attention of the reader almost exclusively, Madame D'Arblay never excelled.

SISMONDI'S LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH

Vol. xxv.] [*June* 1815.

This is another great work from the pen of the celebrated historian of the Italian Republics: though we think it written, on the whole, with less force and spirit than that admirable history. The excellent author has visibly less enthusiasm as a critic than as a politician; and therefore he interests us less in that character, and at the same time inspires us rather with less than greater confidence in the accuracy of his opinions; for there can be no real love of liberty, or admiration of genius, where there is no enthusiasm—and no one who does not love them, will ever submit to the labour of a full and fair investigation of their history and concerns. A cold, calculating indifference in matters of taste, is generally the effect of want of feeling; as affected moderation in politics is (nine times out of ten) a cloak for want of principle. Notwithstanding the very great pleasure we have received from the work before us, we should have been still more gratified, therefore, if the author had himself appeared more delighted with his task, and consequently imparted to it a more decided and

original character. In his Republics, he describes events and characters in the history of modern Italy with the genuine feelings of an enlightened reasoner, indignant at the wrongs, the vices, and the degradation of the country of his ancestors: In judging of its literature, he too often borrows French rules and German systems of criticism. His practical taste and speculative principles do not, therefore, always coincide; and, regarding this work on Literature as an appendage to his History, it is impossible not to observe, that he is glad, upon all occasions, to slide into his old and favourite subject; to pass from the professor's chair into the rostrum; and to connect, in glowing terms, the rise or fall of letters with the political independence or debasement of the states in which they flourished or decayed.

If we were to hazard any other preliminary remark of a general character, it should be, that the author appears to have a more intimate acquaintance with, and a great predilection for, the more modern and immediately popular writers of Italy, than for those who appear to us objects of greater curiosity and admiration. Thus, he dismisses Dante, Petrarca and Boccacio, in fewer pages than he devotes to Metastasio alone—an author whose chief merit he himself defines to be, the happy adaptation of his pieces to the musical recitative of the opera, and which, therefore, in a literary point of view, must be comparatively uninteresting. Again, Ariosto makes, in his hands, a very slender appearance by the side of Tasso—an appearance by no means proportioned to the size of the men, or to the interest which is felt in them, or to the scope for criticism in their different works. The account of the two modern Italian dramatists, Alfieri and Goldoni, though given much at length, is not certainly liable to the same kind of objection, as the information with respect to them is valuable from its novelty.

The present volumes contain a general view of the literature of the South of Modern Europe,—of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the Provençal. The author proposes, in another work, to examine that of the North, particularly of England and Germany. The publication now before us was (we are informed in the preface) originally composed to be delivered to a class of young persons at Geneva: and this circumstance, while it has added to its value and comprehensiveness as a book of reference, has made it less entertaining to the general reader. A body of criticism, like a body of divinity, must contain a great deal of matter less pleasant than profitable in the perusal. In our account of it, we shall direct the reader's attention to what most forcibly arrested our own—premising merely, that among the writers to whom M. Sismondi is forward to acknowledge

his obligations, are, Professor Boutterwek on modern literature in general, Millot's history of the Troubadours, Tiraboschi and M. Guiguené on the Italian literature, Velasquez on the Spanish and Portuguese, and William Schlegel for the dramatic literature of all these nations. It is to this last author that he seems to be indebted for a great part of his theoretical reasoning and conjectural criticism on the general principles of taste and the progress of human genius.

The first volume commences with an account of the Provençal poetry, which is by no means the least interesting or curious part of this extensive and elaborate work. We shall endeavour to give some general idea of it to our readers. The language which prevailed in all the South of Europe, after the destruction of the Roman empire, was a barbarous mixture of Latin with the different languages of the Northern invaders. It was in the south of France that this language first took a consistent form, and became the vehicle of a gay and original poetry. The causes which contributed to invest it with this distinction, were, according to M. Sismondi, 1. The comparative exemption of the Francs from perpetual successive inroads of barbarous conquerors; and, 2. The collateral influence of the Moorish or Arabian literature, through the connection between the kingdoms of Spain and Provence. The description given by the author of the Arabian literature, which 'rose like an exhalation,' and disappeared almost as soon, is splendid in the extreme. In a hundred and fifty years, human genius is said to have produced more prodigies in that prolific region, than it has done in the history of ages in all the world besides. Arts and sciences had their birth, maturity and perfection;—almost all the great modern discoveries (as they have been considered) were anticipated, and again forgotten,—paper, printing, the mariner's compass, glass, gunpowder, &c. In the exercise of fancy and invention, they infinitely surpassed all former or succeeding ages. As an instance of the prodigious scale on which these matters were conducted in the East, and of the colossal size to which their literature had swelled in all its branches, it is stated that the Thousand and One Stories forming the Arabian Nights' Entertainment, constitute only a six-and-thirtieth part of the original collection. We suspect that there is some exaggeration in all this; though the brilliant theories of our author have, no doubt, very considerable foundation in fact. We hope there is none for the eloquent, but melancholy, reflections he makes on the sudden disappearance of so much intellectual magnificence from the face of the earth.

'Such,' he says, 'was the lustre with which literature and sciences shone forth from the ninth to the fourteenth century of our era, in the vast regions which were subjected to Mahometism. The most

melancholy reflections are attached to the long enumeration of names unknown to us, and which were nevertheless illustrious,—of works buried in manuscript in some dusty repositories—which yet for a time had a powerful influence on the culture of the human mind. What remains then of so much glory? Five or six persons only can visit the treasures of Arabian manuscripts shut up in the library of the Escurial; and some few hundreds besides, scattered over all Europe, have qualified themselves, by obstinate labour, to dig in the mines of the East—but these persons can only obtain, with the utmost difficulty, some rare and obscure manuscripts, and cannot raise themselves high enough to form a judgment on the whole of a literature of which they never attain but a part. Meantime, the extended regions where Mahometism reigned, and still reigns, are dead to all the sciences. Those rich plains of Fez and Morocco, illumined five centuries ago by so many academies, so many universities, and so many libraries, are now nothing but deserts of burning sand, for which tyrants dispute with tigers. All the gay and fertile shore of Mauritania, where commerce, the arts, and agriculture had been raised to the highest prosperity, are now the nests of pirates, who spread terror on the seas, and who relax from their labour in shameful debaucheries, till the plague, which returns yearly, comes to mark out its victims, and to avenge offended humanity. Egypt is nearly swallowed in the sands, which it once fertilized—Syria and Palestine are desolated by wandering Bedouins, less formidable, however, than the Pasha who oppresses them. Bagdad, formerly the abode of luxury, of power, and of knowledge, is ruined; the once celebrated universities of Cufa and Bassora are shut,—those of Samarcande and of Balch are also destroyed. In this immense extent of country, twice or three times as large as our Europe—nothing is found but ignorance, slavery, terror and death. Few of the inhabitants can read any of the writings of their illustrious forefathers;—few could comprehend them—none could procure them. The immense literary riches of the Arabs, of which we have given some glimpses, exist no more in any of the countries which the Arabs and Mussulmen rule.—It is not there that we must now seek either the renown of their great men or their writings. What has been saved of them, is entirely in the hands of their enemies—in the convents of the monks, or in the libraries of the Kings of Europe. And yet these countries have not been conquered. It is not the foreigner who has despoiled them of their wealth, wasted their population, destroyed their laws, their morals, and their national spirit. The poison was within them—it developed itself, and has annihilated all things.

'Who knows if, some centuries hence, this same Europe, where

the reign of literature and sciences is now transported—which shines with such lustre—which judges so well of times past—which compares so well the successive influence of antient literature and morals, may not be deserted, and wild as the hills of Mauritania, the sands of Egypt, and the vallies of Anatolia? Who knows whether, in a country entirely new, perhaps in the high lands where the Oronoko and the Amazon collect their streams, perhaps in the now impenetrable enclosure of the mountains of New Holland, there may not be formed nations with other morals, other languages, other thoughts, other religions,—nations who shall again renew the human kind, who shall study like ourselves the times past, and who, seeing with surprise that we have been, and have known what they shall know—that we have believed like them in durability and glory, shall pity our impotent efforts, and shall recal the names of Newton, of Racine, of Tasso, as examples of the vain struggles of man to attain an immortality of renown which fate denies him?'

The more immediate causes which gave birth to the poetry of the Provençals, and by consequence to all our modern literature, are afterwards detailed in the following passage, which is interesting both in point of fact, and as matter of speculation.

'In Italy, at the time of the renovation of its language, each province, each small district, had a particular dialect. This great number of different *patois*, was owing to two causes; the great number of barbarous tribes with whom the Romans had successively been confounded by the frequent invasions of their country, and the great number of independent sovereignties which had been kept up there. Neither of those causes operated on the Gauls in the formation of the Romanesque. Three hordes established themselves there nearly at the same time,—the Visigoths, the Burgundians, and the Franks; and after the conquest of these last, no northern barbarians could again form a fixed establishment there, except the Normans, in a single province; no mixture of Germans, much less of the Sclavonians and Scythians, came again to produce a change in language and morals. The Gauls had then been employed in consolidating themselves into one nation, with one language, for four ages: during which Italy had been successively the prey of the Lombards, the Francs, the Hungarians, the Saracens, and the Germans. The birth of the Romanesque in Gaul, came thus to precede that of the Italian language. It was divided into two principal dialects:—the Provençal Romanesque, spoken in all the provinces to the south of the Loire, which had been originally conquered by the Visigoths and the Burgundians; and the Walloon Romanesque, in the provinces to the north of the Loire, where the

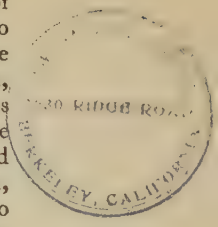
Franks had the ascendant. The political divisions remained conformable to this first division of nations and languages. In spite of the independence of the great feudatories, northern France always formed one political body; the inhabitants of the different provinces met in the same national assemblies, and in the same armies. Southern France, on its side, after having been the inheritance of some of the successors of Charlemagne, had been raised, in 879, to the rank of an independent kingdom, by Bozon, who was crowned at Nantes, under the title of King of Arles or of Provence; and who subjected to his domination Provence, Dauphiny, Savoy, the Lyonese, and some counties of Burgundy. The title of kingdom gave place, in 943, to that of earldom, under Bozon II., without the dismemberment of Provence, or its separation from the House of Burgundy, of which Bozon I. had been the founder. This house was extinguished in 1092, in the person of Gillibert, who left two daughters only, between whom he divided his states. One, Faydide, married Alphonso, Count of Toulouse; and the other, Douce, married Raymond Berenger, Count of Barcelona. The union of Provence during two hundred and thirty years, under a line of princes who played no very brilliant part beyond their own territory, and who are almost forgotten by history, but who suffered no invasion; who, by a paternal administration, augmented the riches, and extended the population of the state, and favoured commerce, to which their maritime situation invited them, sufficed to consolidate the laws, the manners, and the language of the Provençals. It was at this epoch, but in a deep obscurity, that in the kingdom of Arles, the Provençal Romanesque took completely the place of the Latin. The latter was still made use of in the public acts; but the former, which was spoken universally, began also to be made use of in literature.

'The succession of the Count of Barcelona, Raymond Berenger, to the sovereignty of Provence, gave a new turn to the national spirit, by the mixture of the Catalonians with the Provençals. Of the three Romanesque languages, which the Christian inhabitants of Spain then spoke, the Catalonian, the Castilliian, and the Gallician, or Portuguese, the first was almost absolutely like the Provençal; and though it has since been much removed from it, especially in the kingdom of Valencia, it has always been called after the name of a French province. The people of the country call it *Llemosin* or Limousin. The Catalans, therefore, could make themselves well understood by the Provençals; and their intercourse at the same court served to polish the one language by means of the other. The first of these nations had already been much advanced, either by their wars and their intercourse with the Moors of Spain, or by the great activity of

the commerce of Barcelona. This city enjoyed the most ample privileges: the citizens felt their freedom, and made their princes respect it,—at the same time that the wealth which they had acquired rendered the taxes more productive, and permitted the court of the Counts to display a magnificence unknown to other sovereigns. Raymond Berenger, and his successor, brought into Provence at once the spirit of liberty and chivalry, the taste of elegance and the arts, and the sciences of the Arabs. From this union of noble sentiments, arose the poetry which shone at the same time in Provence, and all the south of Europe, as if an electric spark had, in the midst of the thickest darkness, kindled at once in all quarters its brilliant radiance.

'Chivalry arose with the Provençal poetry; it was in some sort the soul of every modern literature: and this character, so different from all that antiquity had known,—that invention, so rich in poetical effects, is the first subject for observation, which modern literary history presents us. We must not, however, confound *feudalism* with *chivalry*. Feudalism is the real world at this epoch—with its advantages and disadvantages, its virtues and its vices; chivalry is this world idealized, such as it has existed only in the invention of the romancers: its essential character is a devotion to woman, and an inviolable regard to honour; but the ideas which the poets manifested then, as to what constituted the perfection of a knight or a lady, were not entirely of their invention. They existed in the people, without perhaps being followed by them; and when they had acquired more consistence in their heroic songs, they reacted in their turn upon the people, among whom they originated, and thus approximated the real feudal system to the ideal notions of chivalry.

'Without doubt, there can be few finer things than the bold and active kind of life which characterized the feudal times; than the independent existence of each nobleman in his castle; than the persuasion which he felt, that God alone was his judge and master; than that confidence in his own power which made him brave all opposition, and offer an inviolable asylum to the weak and unfortunate, —which made him share with his friends the only possessions which they valued, arms and horses,—and rely on himself alone for his liberty, his honour, and his life. But, at the same time, the vices of the human character had acquired a development proportioned to the vigour of men's minds. Among the nobility, whom alone the laws seemed to protect, absolute power had produced its habitual effect,—an intoxication approaching to madness, and a ferocity of which later times afford no example. The tyranny of a baron, it is true, extended only a few leagues round his chateau, or the town which belonged to him: If any one could pass this boundary, he was safe;



but, within these limits, in which he kept his vassals like herds of deer in a park, he gave himself up, in the plenitude of his power, to the wildest caprices; and subjected those who displeased him to the most frightful punishments. His vassals, who trembled before him, were degraded below the human species; and, in the whole of this class, there is hardly an instance of any individual displaying, in the course of ages, a single trait of greatness or virtue. Frankness and good faith, which are essentially the virtues of chivalry, are indeed, in general, the consequence of strength and courage; but, in order to render an adherence to them general, it is indispensable that punishment or shame should be attached to their violation. But the seignoral lords were placed in their chateaus above all fear; and opinion had no force in restraining men who did not feel the relations of social life. Accordingly, the history of the middle ages furnishes a greater number of scandalous perfidies than any other period. Lastly, the passion of love had, it is true, taken a new character, which was much the same in reality and in the poetry of the time. It was not more passionate or more tender than among the Greeks and Romans, but it was more respectful; something mysterious was joined to the sentiment. Some traces of that religious respect were preserved towards women, which the Germans felt towards their prophetesses. They were considered as a sort of angelic beings, rather than as dependants, submitted to the will of their masters: It was a point of honour to serve and to defend them, as if they were the organs of the divinity on earth; and at the same time there was joined to this deference, a warmth of sentiment, a turbulence of passions and desires, which the Germans had known little of, but which is characteristic of the people of the South, and of which they borrowed the expression from the Arabians. In our ideas of chivalry, love always retains this religious purity of character; but in the actual feudal system, the disorder was extreme; and the corruption of manners has left behind it traces more scandalous than in any other period of society. Neither the *sirventes* nor the *canzos* of the troubadours, nor the fables of the trouveres, nor the romances of chivalry, can be read without blushing: the gross licentiousness of the language is equalled only by the profound corruption of the characters, and the profligacy of the moral. In the South of France, in particular, peace, riches, and the example of courts, had introduced among the nobility an extreme dissipation: they might be said to live only for gallantry. The ladies, who did not appear in the world till after they were married, prided themselves in the homage which their lovers paid to their charms: they delighted in being celebrated by their *troubadour*: they answered in their turn, and expressed their

sentiments in the most tender and passionate verses. They even instituted Courts of Love, where questions of gallantry were gravely debated, and decided by their suffrages. In short, they had given to the whole of the South of France the movement of a carnival, which contrasts singularly with the ideas of restraint, of virtue, and of modesty, which we connect with the good old times. The more we study history, the more we shall be convinced that chivalry is an almost purely poetical invention. We never can arrive by any authentic documents at the scene where it flourished: it is always represented at a distance, both in time and place. And while contemporary historians give us a distinct, detailed, complete idea of the vices of courts and of the great, of the ferocity or licentiousness of the nobles, and the degradation of the people; one is astonished to see, after a lapse of time, the same ages animated by the poets with fictitious and splendid accounts of virtue, beauty, and loyalty. The romancers of the twelfth century placed the age of chivalry in the reign of Charlemagne; Francis I. placed it in their time: We at present believe we see it flourishing in the persons of Du Guesclin and of Bayard, at the courts of Charles V. and Francis the I. But when we come to examine any of these periods, though we find some heroic characters in all of them, we are soon forced to confess that it is necessary to remove the age of chivalry three or four centuries before any kind of reality.' p. 91.

This, we cannot help thinking, is a little hard on the *good old times*: though the specimens of their poetry, which are subjoined, go far to justify this severity. They certainly indicate neither refinement of sentiment, nor elevation of fancy. They are merely war or love-songs, relating to the personal feelings or situation of the individual who composed them. The Provençal poetry, indeed, is in a great measure lyrical; at least it is certain, that it is neither epic nor dramatic. The *tensons* were, indeed, a sort of eclogues, or disputes in verse, in which two or three persons maintained their favourite opinions on any given subject; and they appear to have been for the most part extemporaneous effusions. The following example will give some idea of the state of manners and literature at this period.

'Several ladies who assisted at the Courts of Love, as they were called, used to reply themselves to the verses which their beauty inspired. There is left but a small portion of their compositions, but they have almost always the advantage over the troubadours. Poetry did not then aspire either to creative power, or to sublimity of thought, or to variety of imagery. Those powerful efforts of genius, which have given birth at a later period to dramatic and epic poetry, were then unknown; and in the simple expression of feeling, an inspiration,

more tender and more delicate, would give to the poetry of women a more natural expression. One of the most pleasing of these compositions is by Clara d'Anduse: it is left unfinished: but, as far as a prose translation can convey the impression, which depends so much on the harmony of the metre, it is as follows.

'"In what cruel trouble, in what profound sadness, jealous calumniators have plunged my heart! With what malice these perfidious destroyers of all pleasure have persecuted me! They have forced you to banish yourself from me, you whom I love more than life! They have robbed me of the happiness of seeing you, and of seeing you without ceasing! Ah, I shall die of grief and rage!

'"But let calumny arm itself against me: the love with which you inspire me braves all its shafts: they will never be able to reach my heart: nothing can increase its tenderness, or give new force to the desires with which it is inflamed. There is no one, though it were my enemy, who would not become dear to me, by speaking well of you: but my best friend would cease to be so, from the moment he dared to reproach you.

'"No, my sweet friend, no: do not believe that I have a heart treacherous to you: do not fear that I should ever abandon you for another, though I should be solicited by all the ladies of the land. Love, who holds me in his chains, has said, that my heart should be devoted to you alone; and I swear that it shall always be so. Ah, if I was as much mistress of my hand, he who now possesses, should never have obtained it.

'"Beloved! such is the grief which I feel at being separated from you, such my despair, that when I wish to sing, I only sigh and weep. I cannot finish this couplet. Alas! my songs cannot obtain for my heart what it desires."'

The poets of this period were almost all of them chevaliers; and it is in their war-songs, that, according to M. Sismondi, we find most of the enthusiasm of poetry. Guillaume de St. Gregory, thus chants his love for war, and seems to be inspired by the very sight of the field of battle.

'How I love the gay season of the approach of spring, which covers our fields with leaves and flowers! How I love the sweet warbling of the birds, which make the woods resound with their songs! But how much more delightful still it is to see the tents and pavillions pitched in the meadows! How I feel my courage swell, when I see the armed chevaliers on their horses, marching in long array!

'I love to see the cavaliers put to flight,—the common people, who strive to carry away their most precious effects: I love to see the

thick battalions of soldiers, who advance in pursuit of the fugitives; and my joy redoubles when I observe the siege laid to the strongest castles, and hear their battered walls fall with a dreadful crash!' . . . 'Yes, I repeat it again, the pleasures of the table, or of love, are not to be compared, in my mind, with those of the furious fight . . . when I hear the horses neighing on the green meadows, and the cry repeated on all sides, "To arms, to arms!" when the great and the vulgar load the earth with their bodies, or roll, dying, into the ditches; and when large wounds from the blows of the lance mark the victims of honour.'

This poetic rhapsody of the eleventh or twelfth century is not altogether unworthy of the spirit of the nineteenth; so we shall not stop to moralize upon it. One of the most heroic and magnanimous personages of the same period was Bertrand de Born, Vicompte Hautefort. He was a great maker of war and verses. 'The most violent,' says M. Sismondi, 'the most impetuous of the French chevaliers, breathing nothing but war; exciting, inflaming the passions of his neighbours and his superiors, in order to engage them in hostilities, he troubled the provinces of Guienne by his arms and his intrigues, during all the second half of the twelfth century; and the reigns of the Kings of England, Henry II. and Richard Cœur de Lion. He first stripped his brother Constantine of his personal inheritance, and made war upon Richard who protected him. He then attached himself to Henry, the brother of Richard Cœur de Lion, and afterwards made war upon him, after having engaged him in a conspiracy against his father. For this last offence he is put by Dante into his hell. In all his enterprizes, he encouraged himself by composing *sirventes*, that is, songs in which he sounded the war-whoop, in the manner of some writers nearer our own times. Let the reader judge for himself.

'"What signify to me happy or miserable days? What are weeks or years to me? At all times my only wish is, to destroy whoever dares to offend me! Let others, if they please, embellish their houses; let them idly procure the conveniences of life: but, for myself, to collect lances, helmets, swords and implements of destruction, shall be the only object of my life! I am fatigued with advice, and swear never to attend to it!"'

The historical notice of Richard Cœur de Lion gives a striking and more favourable picture of the manners of the time. Every one is acquainted with the story of his deliverance from prison by the fidelity of his servant Blondel, and of his rescue from the Saracens by the gallant device of Guillaume de Preaux, who attracted the fury of the assailants to his own person, by crying out, 'Spare me; for

I am the King of England!' M. Sismondi gives the following as the words of the celebrated song (a little modernized) composed by Richard during the captivity to which he was treacherously subjected by Leopold of Austria, after his return from the Holy Land.

Si prisonnier ne dit point sa raison
Sans un grand trouble, et douloureux soupçon,
Pour son consort qu'il fasse une chanson
J'ai prou d'amis, mais bien pauvre est leur don;
Honte ils auront, si faute de rançon,
Je suis deux hivers pris.

Qu'ils sachent bien, mes hommes, mes barons,
Anglais, Normands, Poitevins et Gascons,
Que je n'ai point si pauvres compagnons
Que pour argent n'ouvrisse leurs prisons.
Point ne les veux taxer de trahison,
Mais suis deux hivers pris.

Pour un captif plus d'ami, de parent!
Plus que ses jours ils epargnent l'argent;
Las! que je sens me douloir ce tourment!
Et si je meurs dans mon confinement,
Qui sauvera le renom de ma gent,
Car suis deux hivers pris?

Point au chagrin ne vaudrais succomber!
Le roi françois peut mes terres brûler,
Fausser la paix qu'il jura de garder;
Pourtant mon cœur je sens se rassurer,
Si je l'en crois, mes fers vont se briser,
Mais suis deux hivers pris.

Fiers ennemis, dont le cœur est si vain,
Pour guerrayer, attendez donc la fin
De mes ennemis; me trouverez enfin,
Dites-le leur, Chail et Pensavin,
Chers troubadours, qui me plaignez en vain
Car suis deux hivers pris.

Among the most distinguished troubadours, we find the names of Arnaud de Marveil, and of Arnaud Daniel, celebrated by Petrarch and Dante, Rambaud de Vaqueiras, and Pierre Vidal, both warriors and poets, and Pierre Cardinal, the satirist of Provence. The Provençal literature does not however appear to have produced any one great genius or lasting work. Their poetry, indeed, did not aim at immortality; but appears to have been considered chiefly as an orna-

mental appendage of courts, as the indolent amusement of great lords and ladies. It consists, therefore, entirely of occasional and fugitive pieces. The ambition of the poet seems never to have reached higher than to express certain habitual sentiments, or record passing events in agreeable verse, so as to gratify himself or his immediate employers; and his genius never appears to have received that high and powerful impulse, which makes the unrestrained development of its own powers its ruling passion, and which looks to future ages for its reward.

The Provençal poetry belongs, in its essence as well as form, to the same class as the Eastern or Asiatic; that is, it has the same constitutional warmth and natural gaiety, but without the same degree of magnificence and force. During its most flourishing period, it made no perceptible progress; and it has left few traces of its influence behind. The civil wars of the Albigeois, the crusades which made the Italian known to all the rest of Europe, and the establishment of the court of Charles of Anjou, the new sovereign of Provence, at Naples, were fatal to the cultivation of a literature which owed its encouragement to political and local circumstances, and to the favour of the great. M. Sismondi compares the effects of the Provençal poetry to the northern lights, which illumine the darkness of the sky, and spread their colours almost from pole to pole; but suddenly vanish, and leave neither light nor heat behind them. After the literature of the troubadours had disappeared from the country which gave it birth, it lingered for a while in the kingdoms of Arragon and Catalonia, where it was cultivated with success by Don Henri of Arragon, Marquis of Villera; by Ausias, who has been called the Petrarch; and by Jean Martorell, the Boccacio of the Provençal tongue, and the well-known author of the history of Tirante the White, which is preserved by Cervantes with such marks of respect, when Don Quixote's library is condemned to the flames.

Our author next enters at great length, and with much acuteness, into the literature of the North of France, or the *Roman Wallon*, which succeeded the Provençal. The great glory of the writers of this language, was the invention of the romances of chivalry. M. Sismondi divides these romances into three classes or periods, and supposes them all to be of Norman origin, in contradiction to the very general theory which traces them to the Arabs or Moors. The first class relates to the exploits of King Arthur, the son of Pendragon, and the last British king who defended England against the Anglo-Saxons. It is at the court of this king, and of his wife Geneura, that we meet with the enchanter Merlin, and the institution of the Round Table, and all the Preux chevaliers, Tristram de Leonois,

Launcelot of the Lake, and many others. The romance of Launcelot of the Lake was begun by Chretien de Troyes, and continued, after his death, by Godfrey de Ligny: that of Tristram, the son of King Meliadus of Leonois, the first that was written in prose, and which is the most frequently cited by the old authors, was composed in 1190 by one of the *trouveres* or Northern troubadours, whose name is unknown. The second class of chivalrous romances, is that which commences with Amadis of Gaul, the hero of lovers, of which the events are more fabulous, and the origin more uncertain. There are numerous imitations of this work, Amadis of Greece, Florismarte of Hircania, Galaor, Florestan, Esplandian, which are considered as of Spanish origin, and which were in their greatest vogue at the time of the appearance of Don Quixote. The third class considered by our author, as undoubtedly of French origin, relates to the court of Charlemagne and his peers. The most antient monument of the marvellous history of Charlemagne, is the chronicle of Turpin, or Tilpin, Archbishop of Rheims. Both the name of the author and the date are, however, doubtful. It relates to the last expedition of Charlemagne into Spain, to which he had been miraculously invited by St. Jacques of Galicia, and to the wars of the Christians against the Moors. M. Sismondi is inclined to refer this composition to the period when Alphonso VI. king of Castile and Leon, achieved, in the year 1085, the conquest of New Castile and Toledo.

'He was followed,' it is said, 'in this triumphant expedition, by a great number of French chevaliers, who passed the Pyrenees to combat the infidels by the side of a great king, and to see the Cid, the hero of his age. The war against the Moors in Spain was then undertaken from a spirit of religious zeal, very different from that which, twelve years later, kindled the first crusade. Its object professedly was, to carry succour to neighbours, to brothers who adored the same God, and who revenged common injuries, of which the romancer seemed to wish to recal the remembrance: whereas the end of the first crusade was to deliver the Holy Sepulchre, to recover the inheritance of our Lord, and to bring assistance to God rather than man, as one of the troubadours expressed it. This zeal for the Holy Sepulchre, this devotion pointing towards the East, appears nowhere in the Chronicle of Archbishop Turpin; which, nevertheless, is animated by a burning fanaticism, and full of all sorts of miracles. This chronicle, however fabulous, cannot itself be considered as a romance. It consists alternately of incredible feats of arms, and of miracles, of monkish superstition and monkish credulity. We find there several instances of enchantment: the formidable sword of Roland, Durandal, with every stroke opens a wound:

Ferragus is all over enchanted and invulnerable: the dreadful horn of Roland, which he sounds at Roncesvalles to call for succour, is heard as far as St. Jean Pied de Port, where Charlemagne was with his army; but the traitor Ganeton prevents the monarch from giving assistance to his nephew. Roland, losing all hope, is himself desirous to break his sword, that it may not fall into the hands of the infidels, and thus hereafter bathe itself in the blood of Christians: he strikes it against tall trees, against rocks—but nothing can resist the enchanted blade, guided by an arm so powerful; the oaks are overturned, the rocks are shattered in pieces, and Durandal remains entire. Roland at last thrusts it up to the hilt in a hard rock, and twisting it with violence, breaks it between his hands. Then he again sounds his horn, not to demand succour from the Christians, but to announce to them his last hour; and he blows it with such violence, that his veins burst, and he dies covered with his own blood. All this is sufficiently poetical, and indicates a brilliant imagination; but in order to its being a romance of chivalry, it was necessary that love and women should be introduced—and there is no allusion made to one or the other.' p. 289.

This, we think, is rather an arbitrary decision of our author, and certainly does not prove that the work is not a romance of any kind. He concludes this chapter in the following manner.

'But all these extraordinary facts, which in the Chronicle of Turpin passed for history, were consigned soon after to the regions of romance, when the crusades were finished, and had made us acquainted with the East, at the end of the thirteenth century, and during the reign of Philip the Hardy. The king at arms of this monarch, Adenez, wrote in verse the romance of *Berthe-au-grandpied*; the mother of Charlemagne, that of Ogier the Dane, and Cleomadis. Huon de Villeneuve wrote the history of Renaud de Montauban. The four sons of Aymon, Huon de Bourdeaux, Doolin de Mayence, Morgante the giant, Maugis the christian magician, and several other heroes of this illustrious court, were celebrated then or afterwards by romancers, who have placed in broad day all the characters, and all the events of this period of glory, of which the divine poem of Ariosto has consecrated the mythology.—The creation of this brilliant romantic chivalry, was completed at the end of the thirteenth century; all that essentially characterizes it, is to be found in the romances of Adenez. His chevaliers no longer wandered, like those of the Round Table, through gloomy forests in a country half civilized, and which seemed always covered with storms and snow: the entire universe was expanded before their eyes, The Holy Land was the grand object of their pilgrimage: but by it they

entered into communication with the fine and rich countries of the East. Their geography was as confused as all their other knowledge. Their voyages from Spain to Cathay, from Denmark to Tunis, were made, it is true, with a facility, a rapidity more astonishing than the enchantments of Maugis or Morgana: but these fanciful voyages afforded the romance writers the means of embellishing their recitals with the most brilliant colours. All the softness and the perfumes of the countries, the most favoured by nature, were at their disposal: All the pomp and magnificence of Damascus, of Bagdad, and Constantinople, might be made use of to adorn the triumph of their heroes; and an acquisition more precious still, was the imagination itself of the people of the East and South; that imagination, so brilliant, so various, which was employed to give life to the sombre mythology of the North. The fairies were no longer hideous sorceresses, the objects of the fear and hatred of the people, but the rivals or the friends of those enchanters, who disposed in the east of Solomon's ring, and of the genii who were attached to it. To the art of prolonging life, they had joined that of augmenting its enjoyments: they were in some sort the priestesses of nature and of its pleasures. At their voice, magnificent palaces arose in the deserts; enchanted gardens, groves, perfumed with orange-trees and myrtles, appeared in the midst of burning sands, or on barren rocks in the middle of the sea. Gold, diamonds, pearls, covered their garments, or the inside of their palaces: and their love, far from being reputed sacrilegious, was often the sweetest recompense of the toils of the warrior. It was thus that Ogier the Dane, the valiant paladin of Charlemagne, was received by the fairy Morgana in her castle of Avalon. She placed on his head the fatal crown of gold, covered with precious stones, and leaves of laurel, myrtle, and roses, to which was attached the gift of immortal youth, and, at the same time, the oblivion of every other sentiment than the love of Morgana. From this moment the hero no longer remembered the court of Charlemagne; nor the glory which he had acquired in France; nor the crowns of Denmark, of England, Acre, Babylon, and Jerusalem, which he had worn in succession; nor all the battles he had fought, nor the number of giants he had vanquished. He passed two hundred years with Morgana in the intoxication of love, without being sensible of the flight of time; and when, by chance, his crown fell off into a fountain, and his memory was restored, he thought Charlemagne still living, and demanded with impatience, tidings of the brave paladins, his companions in arms. In reading this elegant fiction, we easily discover, that it was written after the Crusades had opened a communication between the people of the East and those of the West,

and had enriched the French with all the treasures of the Arabian imagination!'

M. Sismondi also justly ascribes the invention of the Mysteries, the first modern efforts of the dramatic art, to the French; but the inference which he draws from it, that this was owing to the great dramatic genius of that people, must excite a smile in many of his readers. For, certainly, if there ever was a nation utterly and universally incapable of forming a conception of any other manners or characters than those which exist among themselves, it is the French. The learned author is right, however, in saying that the Mystery of the Passions, and the moralities performed by the French company of players, laid the foundation of the drama in various parts of Europe, and also suggested the first probable hint of the plan of the *Divine Comedy* of Dante; but it is not right to say that the merit of this last work consists at all in the design. The design is clumsy, mechanical, and monotonous; the invention is in the style.

We have hitherto followed M. Sismondi in his account of the progress of modern literature, before the Italian language had been made the vehicle of poetical composition, and before the revival of letters. The details which he gives on the last subject, and the extraordinary picture he presents of the pains and labour undergone by the scholars of that day in recovering antient manuscripts, and the remains of antient art, are highly interesting. It is from this important event, and also from the work of Dante, the first lasting monument of modern genius, that we should strictly date the origin of modern literature; and, indeed, it would not be difficult to show, that it is still the emulation of the antients, working, indeed, on very different materials, from different principles, and with very different results, that has been the great moving spring of the grandest efforts of human genius in our own times. Our author next follows the progress of the Italian language, particularly at the court of the Sicilian Monarchs, to the period of which we are speaking. He thus introduces his account of the first great name in modern literature.

'Nevertheless, no poet had as yet powerfully affected the mind, no philosopher had penetrated the depths of thought and sentiment, when the greatest of the Italians, the father of their poetry, Dante, appeared, and showed to the world how a powerful genius is able to arrange the gross materials prepared for him, in such a manner as to rear from them an edifice, magnificent as the universe, of which it was the image. Instead of love songs, addressed to an imaginary mistress,—instead of madrigals, full of cold conceits,—of sonnets painfully harmonious,—or allegories false and forced, the only models which Dante had before his eyes in any modern tongue, he conceived

in his mind an image of the whole invisible world, and unveiled it to the eyes of his astonished readers. In the country, indeed, of Dante, that is, at Florence, on the 1st of May, 1304,' (our author says), 'all the sufferings of hell were placed before the eyes of the people, at a horrible representation appointed for a festival day; the first idea of which was no doubt taken from the Inferno. The bed of the river Arno was to represent the gulf of hell; and all the variety of torments which the imagination of monks or of the poet had invented, streams of boiling pitch, flames, ice, serpents, were inflicted on real persons, whose cries and groans rendered the illusion complete to the spectators.

'The subject, then, which Dante chose for his immortal poem, when he undertook to celebrate the invisible world, and the three kingdoms of the dead, hell, purgatory, and paradise, was in that age the most popular of all; at once the most profoundly religious, and the most closely allied to the love of country, of glory, and of party-feelings, inasmuch as all the illustrious dead were to appear on this extraordinary theatre; and in short, by its immensity, the most loftily sublime of any which the mind of man has ever conceived. The commentaries on Dante, left us by Boccace and others, furnish a new proof of the superiority of this great man. We are there astonished to find his professed admirers unable to appreciate his real grandeur. Dante himself, as well as his commentators, attaches his excellence to purity and correctness: yet he is neither pure nor correct; but he is *a creator*. His characters walk and breathe; his pictures are nature itself; his language always speaks to the imagination, as well as to the understanding; and there is scarcely a stanza in his poem, which might not be represented with the pencil.'

M. Sismondi seems to have understood the great poet of Italy little better than his other commentators; and indeed the *Divine Comedy* must completely baffle the common rules of French criticism, which always seeks for excellence in the external image, and never in the internal power and feeling. But Dante is nothing but power, passion, self-will. In all that relates to the imitative part of poetry, he bears no comparison with many other poets; but there is a gloomy abstraction in his conceptions, which lies like a dead-weight upon the mind; a benumbing stupor from the intensity of the impression; a terrible obscurity like that which oppresses us in dreams; an identity of interest which moulds every object to its own purposes, and clothes all things with the passions and imaginations of the human soul, that make amends for all other deficiencies. Dante is a striking instance of the essential excellences and defects of modern genius. The immediate objects he presents to the mind, are

not much in themselves;—they generally want grandeur, beauty, and order; but they become every thing by the force of the character which he impresses on them. His mind lends its own power to the objects which it contemplates, instead of borrowing it from them. He takes advantage even of the nakedness and dreary vacuity of his subject. His imagination peoples the shades of death, and broods over the barren vastnesses of illimitable space. In point of diction and style, he is the severest of all writers, the most opposite to the flowery and glittering—who relies most on his own power, and the sense of power in the reader—who leaves most to the imagination.[1]

Dante's only object is to interest; and he interests only by exciting our sympathy with the emotion by which he is himself possessed. He does not place before us the objects by which that emotion has been excited; but he seizes on the attention, by showing us the effect they produce on his feelings; and his poetry accordingly frequently gives us the thrilling and overwhelming sensation which is caught by gazing on the face of a person who has seen some object of horror. The improbability of the events, the abruptness and monotony in the Inferno, are excessive; but the interest never flags, from the intense earnestness of the author's mind. Dante, as well as Milton, appears to have been indebted to the writers of the old Testament for the gloomy tone of his mind, for the prophetic fury which exalts and kindles his poetry. But there is more deep-working passion in Dante, and more imagination in Milton. Milton, more perhaps than any other poet, elevated his subject, by combining image with image in lofty gradation. Dante's great power is in combining internal feelings with familiar objects. Thus the gate of Hell, on which that withering inscription is written, seems to be endowed with speech and consciousness, and to utter its dread warning, not without a sense of mortal woes. The beauty to be found in Dante is of the same severe character, or mixed with deep sentiment. The story of Geneura, to which we have just alluded, is of this class. So is the affecting apostrophe, addressed to Dante by one of his countrymen, whom he meets in the other world.

> 'Sweet is the dialect of Arno's vale!
> Though half consumed, I gladly turn to hear.'

And another example, even still finer, if any thing could be finer, is his description of the poets and great men of antiquity, whom he represents 'serene and smiling,' though in the shades of death,

[1] See, among a thousand instances, the conclusion of the story of Geneura.—'And all that day we read no more!'

——'because on earth their names
In fame's eternal records shine for aye.'

This is the finest idea ever given of the love of fame.

Dante habitually unites the absolutely local and individual with the greatest wildness and mysticism. In the midst of the obscure and shadowy regions of the lower world, a tomb suddenly rises up, with this inscription, 'I am the tomb of Pope Anastasius the Sixth':—and half the personages whom he has crowded into the Inferno are his own acquaintance. All this tends to heighten the effect by the bold intermixture of realities, and the appeal, as it were, to the individual knowledge and experience of the reader. There are occasional striking images in Dante—but these are exceptions; and besides, they are striking only from the weight of consequences attached to them. The imagination of the poet retains and associates the objects of nature, not according to their external forms, but their inward qualities or powers; as when Satan is compared to a cormorant. It is not true, then, that Dante's excellence consists in natural description or dramatic invention. His characters are indeed 'instinct with life' and sentiment; but it is with the life and sentiment of the poet. In themselves they have little or no dramatic variety, except what arises immediately from the historical facts mentioned; and they afford, in our opinion, very few subjects for picture. There is indeed one gigantic one, that of Count Ugolino, of which Michael Angelo made a bas-relief, and which Sir Joshua Reynolds ought not to have painted. Michael Angelo was naturally an admirer of Dante, and has left a sonnet to his memory.

The Purgatory and Paradise are justly characterised by our author as 'a falling off' from the Inferno. He however points out a number of beautiful passages in both these divisions of the poem. That in which the poet describes his ascent into heaven, completely marks the character of his mind. He employs no machinery, or supernatural agency, for this purpose; but mounts aloft 'by the sole strength of his desires—fixing an intense regard on the orbit of the sun'! This great poet was born at Florence in 1265, of the noble family of the Alighieri—and died at Ravenna, September 14th, 1321. Like Milton, he was unfortunate in his political connexions, and, what is worse, in those of his private life. He had a few imitators after his death, but none of any eminence.

M. Sismondi professes to have a prejudice against Petrarch. In this he is not, as he supposes, singular; but we suspect that he is wrong. He seems to have reasoned on a very common, but very false hypothesis, that because there is a great deal of false wit and

affectation in Petrarch's style, he is therefore without sentiment. The sentiment certainly does not consist in the conceits;—but is it not there in spite of them? The fanciful allusions, and the quaintnesses of style lie on the surface; and it is sometimes found convenient to make these an excuse for not seeking after that which lies deeper and is of more value.[1] It has been well observed, by a contemporary critic, that notwithstanding the adventitious ornaments with which their style is encumbered, there is more truth and feeling in Cowley and Sir Philip Sidney, than in a host of insipid and merely natural writers. It is not improbable, that if Shakespeare had written nothing but his sonnets and smaller poems, he would, for the same reason, have been assigned to the class of cold, artificial writers, who had no genuine sense of nature or passion. Yet, taking his plays for a guide to our decision, it requires no very great sagacity or boldness to discover that his other poems contain a rich vein of thought and sentiment. We apprehend it is the same with Petrarch. The sentiments themselves are often of the most pure and natural kind, even where the expression is the most laboured and far-fetched. Nor does it follow, that this artificial and scholastic style was the result of affectation in the author. All pedantry is not affectation. Inveterate habit is not affectation. The technical jargon of professional men is not affectation in them: for it is the language with which their ideas have the strongest associations. Milton's Classical Pedantry was perfectly involuntary: it was the style in which he was accustomed to think and feel; and it would have required an effort to have expressed himself otherwise. The scholastic style is not indeed the natural style of the passion or sentiment of love; but it is quite false to argue, that an author did not feel this passion because he expressed himself in the usual language in which this and all other passions were expressed, in the particular age and country in which he lived. On the contrary, the more true and profound the feeling itself was, the more it might be supposed to be identified with his other habits and pursuits—to tinge all his thoughts, and to put in requisition every faculty of his soul—to give additional perversity to his wit, subtlety to his understanding, and extravagance to his expressions. Like all other strong passions, it seeks to express itself in exaggerations, and its characteristic is less to be simple than emphatic. The language of love was never more finely expressed than in the play of Romeo and Juliet; and yet assuredly the force or

[1] The late Mr. Burke was a writer of a very splendid imagination, and great command of words. This was, with many persons, a sufficient ground for concluding that he was a mere rhetorician, without depth of thought or solidity of judgment.

beauty of that language does not arise from its simplicity. It is the fine rapturous enthusiasm of youthful sensibility, which tries all ways to express its emotions, and finds none of them half tender or extravagant enough. The sonnet of Petrarch lamenting the death of Laura,[1] which is quoted by M. Sismondi, and of which he complains as having 'too much wit,' would be a justification of these remarks; not to mention numberless others.

M. Sismondi wishes that the connexion between Petrarch and Laura had been more intimate, and his passion accompanied with more interesting circumstances. The whole is in better keeping as it is. The love of a man like Petrarch would have been less in character, if it had been less ideal. For the purposes of inspiration, a single interview was quite sufficient. The smile which sank into his heart the first time he ever beheld her, played round her lips ever after: the look with which her eyes first met his, never passed away. The image of his mistress still haunted his mind, and was recalled by every object in nature. Even death could not dissolve the fine illusion: for that which exists in the imagination is alone imperishable. As our feelings become more ideal, the impression of the moment indeed becomes less violent; but the effect is more general and permanent. The blow is felt only by reflection; it is the rebound that is fatal. We are not here standing up for this

[1] 'Gli occhi di ch' io parlai si caldamente
E le braccia, e le mani, e i piedi, e 'l viso
Che m' havean si da me stesso diviso,
E fatto singular fra l' altra gente;
Le crispe chiome d' or puro lucente,
E 'l lampeggiar de l' angelico riso,
Che solean far in terra un paradiso,
Poco pulvere son che nulla sente!
Ed io pur vivo! onde mi doglio e sdegno.
Rimaso senza 'l lume, ch' amai tanto,
In gran fortuna, e 'n disarmato legno.
Or sia qui fine al mio amoroso canto.
Secca e la vena de l' usato ingegno
E la cetera mia rivolta in pianto.'

Literally as follows. 'Those eyes of which I spoke so warmly, and the arms, and the hands, and the feet, and the face, which have robbed me of myself, and made me different from others; those crisped locks of pure shining gold, and the lightning of that angelical smile, which used to make a heaven upon earth, are now a little dust which feels nothing!—And I still remain! whence I lament and disdain myself, left without the light which I loved so much, in a troubled sea, and with dismantled bark. Here then must end all my amorous songs. Dry is the vein of my exhausted genius, and my lyre answers only in lamentations!'

kind of Platonic attachment; but only endeavouring to explain the way in which the passions very commonly operate in minds accustomed to draw their strongest interests from constant contemplation.

Petrarch is at present chiefly remembered for his sonnets, and the passion which they celebrate: he was equally distinguished in his lifetime by his Latin poems, and as one of the great restorers of learning. The following account of him is in many respects interesting.

'Petrarch, the son of a Florentine who had been exiled as well as Dante, was born at Arezzo, in the night of the 19th of July 1304, and died at Arqua, near Padua, the 18th July 1374. He had been, during the century of which his life occupied three-fourths, the centre of all the Italian literature. Passionately fond of letters, history, and poetry, and an enthusiastic admirer of antiquity, he communicated by his discourse, his writings, and his example, to all his contemporaries, that impulse towards research and the study of the Latin manuscripts, which so particularly distinguished the fourteenth century; which preserved the *chef-d'œuvres* of the classic writers, at the moment when, perhaps, they were about to be lost for ever; and which changed, by means of these admirable models, the whole march of the human mind. Petrarch, tormented by the passion which has contributed so much to his celebrity, wishing to fly from himself, or to vary his thoughts by the distraction of different objects, travelled during almost the whole course of his life. He explored France, Germany, all the states of Italy: he visited Spain: and, in a continual activity directed to the discovery of the monuments of antiquity, he associated himself with all the learned, and with all the poets and philosophers of his time. From one end of Europe to the other, he made them concur in this great object; he directed their pursuits; and his correspondence became the magic chain which for the first time united the whole literary republic of Europe. The age in which he lived was that of small states. No sovereign had as yet established any of those colossal empires, the authority of which makes itself dreaded by nations of different languages. On the contrary, each country was divided into a great number of sovereignties; and the monarch of a small city was without power at a distance of thirty leagues, and unknown at the distance of a hundred. But the more political power was circumscribed, the more the glory of letters was extended: and Petrarch, the friend of Azzo of Correggio, prince of Parma, of Luchin and of Galeazzi Visconti, princes of Milan, and of Francis of Carrara, prince of Padua, was better known and more respected by Europe at large than all these sovereigns.

The universal glory which his great knowledge had procured him, and which he directed to the service of letters, also frequently called him into the political career. No man of learning, or poet, has ever been charged with so great a number of embassies to so many great potentates,—the emperor, the Pope, the king of France, the senate of Venice, and all the princes of Italy: and, what is remarkable, is, that Petrarch did not fulfil those missions as belonging to the state with whose interests he was charged, but as belonging to all Europe. He received his title from his glory; and when he treated between different powers, it was almost as an arbiter whose suffrage each was desirous to secure with posterity. In fine, he gave to his age that enthusiasm for the beauties of antiquity, that veneration for learning, which renovated its character, and determined that of all succeeding times. It was in some sort in the name of grateful Europe, that Petrarch was crowned in the Capitol by the senator of Rome, the 8th of April 1341; and this triumph, the most glorious which has ever been decreed to any one, was not disproportioned to the influence which this great man has exerted over the ages which succeeded him.'

Boccacio was also one of the most indefatigable and successful of the restorers of ancient learning; and is classed by M. Sismondi as one of the three inventors of modern letters,—having done for Italian prose what Dante and Petrarch had done for Italian poetry. He was born at Paris in 1313, the son of a Florentine merchant; and died at Certaldo, in Tuscany, in the house of his forefathers, 21st December 1375, at the age of sixty-two years. He wrote epic poems and theology: But his Tales are his great work.

'The Decameron,' says our author, 'the work to which, in the present day, Boccacio owes his high celebrity, is a collection of a hundred novels, which he has arranged in an ingenious manner, by supposing, that in the dreadful plague in 1348, a society of men and women, who had retired into the country to avoid the contagion, had imposed on themselves an obligation, for ten days together, to recite each a novel a day. The company consisted of ten persons; and the number of novels is, of course, a hundred. The description of the delicious country round Florence, where these joyous hermits took up their abode,—that of their walks—their festivals—their repasts, has given Boccacio an opportunity to display all the riches of a style the most flexible and graceful. The novels themselves, which are varied with infinite art, both as to the subject and manner, from the most touching and tender to the most playful, and unfortunately also to the most licentious, demonstrate his talent for recounting

in every style and tone. His description of the plague of Florence, which serves as the introduction, ranks as one of the finest historical portraits which any age has left us. Finally, that which constitutes the glory of Boccacio, is the perfect purity of the language, the elegance, the grace, and above all, the *naïveté* of the style, which is the highest merit of this class of writing, and the peculiar charm of the Italian language.'

All this is true; though it might be said of many other authors: But what ought to have been said of him is, that there is in Boccacio's serious pieces a truth, a pathos, and an exquisite refinement of sentiment, which is not to be met with in any other prose writer whatever. We think M. Sismondi has missed a fine opportunity of doing the author of the Decameron that justice which has not been done him by the world. He has in general passed for a mere narrator of lascivious tales or idle jests. This character probably originated in the early popularity of his attacks on the monks, and has been kept up by the grossness of mankind, who revenged their own want of refinement on Boccacio, and only saw in his writings what suited the coarseness of their own tastes. But the truth is, that he has carried sentiment of every kind to its very highest purity and perfection. By sentiment we would here understand the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely upon itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances. In this way, nothing ever came up to the story of Frederigo Alberigi and his falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroical sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious too, and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-for, and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author. The story of Isabella is scarcely less fine, and is more affecting in the circumstances and the catastrophe. Dryden has done justice to the impassioned eloquence of the Tancred and Sigismunda; but has not given an adequate idea of the wild preternatural interest of the story of Honoria. Cimon and Iphigene is by no means one of the best, notwithstanding the popularity of the subject. The proof of unalterable affection given in the story of Jeronymo, and the simple touches of nature and picturesque beauty in the story of the two holiday lovers, who were poisoned by tasting of a leaf in the garden at Florence, are perfect masterpieces. The epithet of Divine was well bestowed on this great painter of the human heart. The invention implied in his different tales is immense: but we are not to infer that it is all his own. He probably availed

himself of all the common traditions which were floating in his time, and which he was the first to appropriate. Homer appears the most original of all authors—probably for no other reason than that we can trace the plagiarism no farther. Several of Shakespeare's plots are taken from Boccacio; and indeed he has furnished subjects to numberless writers since his time, both dramatic and narrative. The story of Griselda is borrowed from the Decameron by Chaucer; as is the knight's Tale (Palamon and Arcite) from his poem of the Theseid.

M. Sismondi follows the progress of Italian literature with great accuracy and judgment, from this period to that of their epic and romantic writers. Pulci and Boyardo preceded Ariosto and Tasso. It has been observed that there is a great resemblance between the style of Pulci's Morganti Maggiore and that of Voltaire. Thus, one of the personages in his poem being questioned as to the articles of his faith, says, that 'he believes in a fat capon and a bottle of wine.' His hero Rolando arriving at the gate of a monastery, on which some giants showered down fragments of rocks from the neighbouring mountain every night and morning, is advised by the Abbot to make haste in, 'for that the manna is going to fall!' This kind of levity of allusion, was characteristic of the literature of the age. One of these giants, to wit, Morganti, is converted by Orlando; but makes a very indifferent christian after all. This writer has a certain familiar sarcastic gaiety in common with Ariosto, but none of his enthusiasm or elevation. The Orlando Amoroso of Boyardo, who was governor of Reggio, and one of the courtiers of Duke Hercules of Ferrara, was the foundation of Ariosto's poem.

'This poem,' says our author, 'which is at present known only from the more modern edition of Berni, who revised it sixty years after, is superior to that of Pulci, in the variety and novelty of the adventures, the richness of the colouring, and in the interest it excites. The women here appear, what they ought to be in a romance, the soul of the work; Angelica here shows herself in all her charms, and with all her power over the bravest knights. All those warriors, whether Moors or Christians, whose names have become almost historical, received from Boyardo their existence, and the characters which they have preserved ever since. We are told that he took the names of several, as Gradasso, Sacripant, Agramant, Mandiscardo, from those of his vassals at his estate of Scandiano, where these families still remain: but it seems he wished for a still more sounding name for the most redoubtable of his Moorish chiefs. While on a hunting party, that of Rodomont came into his mind. On the instant

he returned full gallop to his chateau, and had the bells rung and the cannon fired in sign of a fete, to the great astonishment of the peasants, to whom this new saint was quite unknown. The style of Boyardo did not correspond with the vivacity of his imagination: It is little laboured; the verse is harsh and tedious; and it was not without reason that in the following age it was judged proper to give a new form to his work.'

The account given of Ariosto and Tasso is in general correct as to the classification of their different styles, and the enumeration of their particular excellences or defects; but we should be inclined to give the preference in the contrary way. Ariosto's excellence is (what it is here described) infinite grace and gaiety. He has fine animal spirits, an heroic disposition, sensibility mixed with vivacity, an eye for nature, great rapidity of narration and facility of style, and, above all, a genius buoyant, and with wings like the Griffin-horse of Rogero, which he turns and winds at pleasure. He never labours under his subject; never pauses; but is always setting out on fresh exploits. Indeed, his excessive desire not to overdo any thing, has led him to resort to the unnecessary expedient of constantly breaking off in the middle of his story, and going on to something else. His work is in this respect worse than Tristram Shandy; for there the progress of the narrative is interrupted by some incident, in a dramatic or humorous shape; but here the whole fault lies with the author. The Orlando Furioso is a tissue of these separate stories, crossing and jostling one another; and is therefore very inferior, in the general construction of the plot, to the Jerusalem Delivered. But the incidents in Ariosto are more lively, the characters more real, the language purer, the colouring more natural: even the sentiments show at least as much feeling, with less appearance of affectation. There is less effort, less display, a less imposing use made of the common ornaments of style and artifices of composition. Tasso was the more accomplished writer, Ariosto the greater genius. There is nothing in Tasso which is not to be found, in the same or a higher degree, in others: Ariosto's merits were his own. The perusal of the one leaves a peculiar and very high relish behind it; there is a vapidness in the other, which palls at the time, and goes off sooner afterwards. Tasso indeed sets before us a dessert of melons, mingled with roses:—but it is not the first time of its being served up:—the flowers are rather faded, and the fruit has lost its freshness. Ariosto writes on as it happens, from the interest of his subject, or the impulse of his own mind. He is intent only on the adventure he has in hand,—the circumstances which might be supposed to attend it, the feelings which would naturally arise out of it. He

attaches himself to his characters for their own sakes; and relates their achievements for the mere pleasure he has in telling them. This method is certainly liable to great disadvantages; but we on the whole prefer it to the obtrusive artifices of style shown in the Jerusalem,—where the author seems never to introduce any character but as a foil to some other,—makes one situation a contrast to the preceding, and his whole poem a continued antithesis in style, action, sentiment, and imagery. A fierce is opposed to a tender, a blasphemous to a pious character. A lover kills his mistress in disguise, and a husband and wife are represented defending their lives, by a pretty ambiguity of situation and sentiment, warding off the blows which are aimed, not at their own breasts, but at each other's. The same love of violent effect sometimes produces grossness of character, as in Armida, who is tricked out with all the ostentatious trappings of a prostitute. Tasso has more of what is usually called poetry than Ariosto—that is, more tropes and ornaments, and a more splendid and elaborate diction. The latter is deficient in all these:—the figures and comparisons he introduces do not elevate or adorn that which they are brought to illustrate: they are, for the most part, mere parallel cases; and his direct description, simple and striking as it uniformly is, seems to us of a far higher order of merit than the ingenious allusions of his rival. We cannot, however, agree with M. Sismondi, that there is a want of sentiment in Ariosto, or that he excels only as a painter of objects, or a narrator of events. The instance which he gives from the story of Isabella, is an exception to his general power. The episodes of Herminia, and of Tancred and Clorinda, in Tasso, are exquisitely beautiful; but they do not come up, in romantic interest or real passion, to the loves of Angelica and Medoro. We might instance, to the same purpose, the character of Bradamante;—the spirited apostrophe to knighthood, 'Oh ancient knights of true and noble heart;'—that to Orlando, Sacripant, and the other lovers of Angelica—or the triumph of Medoro—the whole progress of Orlando's passion, and the still more impressive description of his sudden recovery from his fatal infatuation, after the restoration of his senses. Perhaps the finest thing in Tasso is the famous description of Carthage, as the warriors pass by it in the enchanted bark. 'Giace l'alta Cartago,' &c. This passage, however, belongs properly to the class of lofty philosophical eloquence; it owes its impressiveness to the grandeur of the general ideas, and not to the force of individual feeling, or immediate passion. The speech of Satan to his companions is said to have suggested the tone of Milton's character of the Devil. But we see nothing in common in the fiend of the two poets. Tasso describes

his as a mere deformed monster. Milton was the first poet who had the magnanimity to paint the devil without horns and a tail; to give him personal beauty and intellectual grandeur, with only moral deformity.

The life of Tasso is one of the most interesting in the world. Its last unfortunate events are related thus by our author.—

'Tasso, admitted into the society of the great, thought himself sufficiently their equal, to fall in love with women of rank; and found himself sufficiently their inferior, to suffer from the consequences of his passion. His writings inform us, that he was attached to a lady of the name of Leonora: but it would seem that he was alternately in love with Leonora of Este, sister to the Duke Alphonso; with Leonora of San Vitale, wife of Julius of Tiena; and with Lucretia Bendidio, one of the maids of honour to the princess. . . . It is said, that one day being at court with the Duke and the Princess Leonora, he was so struck with the beauty of the lady, that, in a transport of love, he approached her suddenly, and embraced her in the eyes of the whole assembly. The Duke, turning coldly to his courtiers, said to them—"What a pity that so great a man should have gone mad!" and on this pretence, had him confined in the hospital of St. Anne, a receptacle for lunatics at Ferrara. His confinement disordered his imagination. His body was enfeebled by the agitation of his mind; he believed himself by turns poisoned, or tormented by witchcraft; he fancied that he saw dreadful apparitions, and passed whole nights in painful watchfulness. He addressed letters of complaint to all his friends, to all the princes of Italy, to the city of Bergamo his native place, to the emperor, to the holy office at Rome, imploring their pity and his liberty. To add to his misfortunes, his poem was published without his permission, from an imperfect copy. He remained confined in the hospital seven years; during which, the numerous writings that proceeded from his pen, could not convince Alphonso II. that he was in his senses. The princes of Italy in vain interposed for his release, which the Duke refused to grant, chiefly to mortify his rivals, the Medici. At length, he was released from his captivity at the instance of Vincent de Gonzago, Prince of Mantua, on the occasion of the marriage of the sister of this nobleman with the unrelenting Alphonso.'

It was during this melancholy interval, that he was seen by Montaigne in his confinement, who, after some striking reflections on the vicissitudes of genius, says,—'I rather envied than pitied him, when I saw him at Ferrara in so piteous a plight, that he survived himself; misacknowledging both himself and his labours, which, unwitting to him, and even to his face, have been published both

uncorrected and maimed!'—Tasso died at Rome in 1599, when he was fifty-one years old. After the Jerusalem, the most celebrated of his works, is his pastoral poem of Aminta, on which the Pastor Fido of Guarini is considered by M. Sismondi as an improvement. He published both comedies and tragedies. He composed a tragedy, called *Il Torrismondo*, while in prison, and dedicated it to his liberator, the Prince of Mantua. The concluding chorus of this tragedy possesses the most profound pathos; and the poet, in writing it, had evidently an eye to his own misfortunes and his glory, which he saw, or thought he saw, vanishing from him—'Like the swift Alpine torrent, like the sudden lightning in the calm night, like the passing wind, the melting vapour, or the winged arrow, so vanishes our fame; and all our glory is but a fading flower. What then can we hope, or what expect more? After triumphs and palms, all that remains for the soul, is strife and lamentation, and regret; neither love nor friendship can avail us aught, but only tears and grief!'

We have thus gone through M. Sismondi's account of the great Italian poets; and should now proceed to the consideration of their more modern brethren of the drama, and of the Spanish and Portuguese writers in general: But we cannot go on with this splendid catalogue of foreigners, without feeling ourselves drawn to the native glories of two of our own writers, who were certainly indebted in a great degree to the early poets of Italy, and must be considered as belonging to the same school.—We mean Chaucer and Spenser—who are now, we are afraid, as little known to the ordinary run of English readers as their tuneful contemporaries in the South. To those among our own countrymen who agree with M. Sismondi in considering the reign of Queen Anne as the golden period of English poetry, it may afford some amusement at least to accompany us for a little in these antiquarian researches.

Though Spenser was much later than Chaucer, his obligations to preceding poets were less. He has in some measure borrowed the plan of his poem from Ariosto; but he has engrafted upon it an exuberance of fancy, and an endless voluptuousness of sentiment, which are not to be found in the Italian writer.—Farther, Spenser is even more of an inventor in the subject-matter. There is a richness and variety in his allegorical personages and fictions, which almost vies with the splendour of the ancient mythology. If Ariosto transports us into the regions of romance, Spenser's poetry is all fairy-land. In Ariosto, we walk upon the ground, in a company, gay, fantastic, and adventurous enough; in Spenser, we wander in another world among ideal beings. The poet takes and lays us in the lap of a lovelier nature, by the sound of softer streams, among greener hills, and fairer

valleys. He paints nature, not as we find it, but as we expected to find it; and fulfils the deluding promise of our youth. He waves his wand of enchantment,—and at once embodies airy beings, and throws a delicious veil over all actual objects. The two worlds of reality and of fiction, seem poised on the wings of his imagination. His ideas indeed seem always more distinct than his perceptions. He is the painter of abstractions, and describes them with dazzling minuteness. In the Mask of Cupid, the god of love 'claps on high his coloured winges *twain*;' and it is said of Gluttony in the procession of the Passions,—

'In green vine-leaves he was right fitly clad.'

At times he becomes picturesque from his intense love of beauty; as, where he compares Prince Arthur's crest to the appearance of the almond-tree. The love of beauty, however, and not of truth, is the moving principle of his mind; and his delineations are guided by no principle but the impulse of an inexhaustible imagination. He luxuriates equally in scenes of Eastern magnificence, or the still solitude of a hermit's cell—in the extremes of sensuality or refinement. With all this, he neither makes us laugh nor weep. The only jest in his poem is an allegory. But he has been falsely charged with a want of passion and of strength. He has both in an immense degree. He has not indeed the pathos of immediate action or suffering, which is the dramatic; but he has all the pathos of sentiment and romance,—all that belongs to distant objects of terror, and uncertain, imaginary distress. His strength, in like manner, is not coarse and palpable,—but it assumes the character of vastness and sublimity, seen through the same visionary medium, and blended with all the appalling associations of preternatural agency. We will only refer to the Cave of Mammon, and to the description of Celleno in the Cave of Despair. The three first books of the Faery Queen are very superior to the others. It is not fair to compare Spenser with Shakespeare, in point of interest. A fairer comparison would be with Comus. There is only one book of this allegorical kind which has more interest than Spenser (with scarcely less imagination); and that is the Pilgrim's Progress.

It is not possible for any two writers to be more opposite than Spenser and Chaucer. Spenser delighted in luxurious enjoyment;—Chaucer in severe activity of mind. Spenser was, perhaps, the most visionary of all the poets;—Chaucer the most a man of observation and of the world. He appealed directly to the bosoms and business of men. He dealt only in realities; and, relying throughout on facts or common tradition, could always produce his vouchers in nature.

His sentiment is not the voluntary indulgence of the poet's fancy, but is founded on the habitual prejudices and passions of the very characters he introduces. His poetry, therefore, is essentially picturesque and dramatic: In this he chiefly differs from Boccacio, whose power was that of sentiment. The picturesque and the dramatic in Chaucer, are in a great measure the same thing; for he only describes external objects as connected with character,—as the symbols of internal passion. The costume and dress of the Canterbury pilgrims,—of the knight,—the 'squire,—the gap-toothed wife of Bath, speak for themselves. Again, the description of the equipage and accoutrements of the two Kings of Thrace and Inde, in the Knight's Tale, are as striking and grand, as the others are lively and natural. His descriptions of natural scenery are in the same style of excellence;—their beauty consists in their truth and characteristic propriety. They have a local freshness about them, which renders them almost tangible; which gives the very feeling of the air, the coldness or moisture of the ground. In other words, he describes inanimate objects from the effect which they have on the mind of the spectator, and as they have a reference to the interest of the story. One of the finest parts of Chaucer is of this mixed kind. It is in the beginning of the Flower and the Leaf, where he describes the delight of that young beauty, shrouded in her bower, and listening in the morning of the year to the singing of the nightingale, while her joy rises with the rising song, and gushes out afresh at every pause, and is borne along with the full tide of pleasure, and still increases, and repeats, and prolongs itself, and knows no ebb. The coolness of the arbour,—its retirement,—the early time of the day,—the sudden starting up of the birds in the neighbouring bushes—the eager delight with which they devour and rend the opening buds and flowers, are expressed with a truth and feeling, which make the whole seem like the recollection of an actual scene. Whoever compares this beautiful and simple passage with Rousseau's description of the Elisée in the New Eloise, will be able to see the difference between good writing and fine writing, or between the actual appearances of nature, and the progress of the feelings they excite in us, and a parcel of words, images and sentiments thrown together without meaning or coherence. We do not say this from any feeling of disrespect to Rousseau, for whom we have a great affection; but his imagination was not that of the poet or the painter. Severity and boldness are the characteristics of the natural style: the artificial is equally servile and ostentatious. Nature, after all, is the soul of art:—and there is a strength in the imagination which reposes immediately on nature, which nothing else can supply. It was this trust in nature, and

reliance on his subject, which enabled Chaucer to describe the grief and patience of Griselda,—the faith of Constance,—and the heroic perseverance of the little child, who, going to school through the streets of Jewry,

'Oh, *Alma redemptoris mater*, loudly sung,'

and who, after his death, still triumphed in his song. Chaucer has more of this deep, internal, sustained sentiment than any other writer, except Boccacio, to whom Chaucer owed much, though he did not owe all to him: for he writes just as well where he did not borrow from that quarter, as where he did; as in the characters of the Pilgrims,—the Wife of Bath's Prologue,—the 'Squire's Tale, and in innumerable others. The poetry of Chaucer has a religious sanctity about it, connected with the manners of the age. It has all the spirit of martyrdom!

In looking back to the *chef-d'œuvres* of former times, we are sometimes disposed to wonder at the little progress which has been made since in poetry, and the arts of imitation in general. But this, perhaps, is a foolish wonder. Nothing is more contrary to fact, than the supposition, that in what we understand by the fine arts, as painting and poetry, relative perfection is the result of repeated success; and that, what has been once well done, constantly leads to something better. What is mechanical, reducible to rule, or capable of demonstration, is indeed progressive, and admits of gradual improvement: but that which is not mechanical or definite, but depends on taste, genius, and feeling, very soon becomes stationary or retrograde, after a certain period, and loses more than it gains by transfusion. The contrary opinion is indeed a common error, which has grown up, like many others, from transferring an analogy of one kind to something quite different, without thinking of the difference in the nature of the things, or attending to the difference of the results. For most persons, finding what wonderful advances have been made in biblical criticism, in chemistry, in mechanics, in geometry, astronomy, &c., *i.e.* in things depending on inquiry and experiment, or on absolute demonstration, have been led hastily to conclude, that there was a general tendency in the efforts of the human intellect to improve by repetition, and, in all arts and institutions, to grow perfect and mature by time. We look back upon the theological creed of our ancestors, and their discoveries in natural philosophy, with a smile of pity: Science, and the arts connected with it, have all had their infancy, their youth and manhood, and seem to have in them no principle of limitation or decay; and, inquiring no farther, we infer, in the intoxication of our pride, and the height of our self-congratulation, that the

same progress has been made, and will continue to be made, in all other things which are the work of man. The fact, however, stares us so plainly in the face, that one would think the smallest reflection must suggest the truth, and overturn our sanguine theories. The greatest poets, the ablest orators, the best painters, and the finest sculptors that the world ever saw, appeared soon after the first birth of these arts, and lived in a state of society which was in other respects rude and barbarous. Those arts which depend on individual genius and incommunicable power, have almost always leaped at once from infancy to manhood—from the first rude dawn of invention to their meridian height and dazzling lustre, and have, in general, declined ever after. This is the peculiar distinction and privilege of science and of art;—of the one, never to arrive at the summit of perfection at all; and of the other, to arrive at it almost at once. Homer, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante and Ariosto, (Milton alone was of a later period, and not the worse for it),—Raphael, Titian, Michael Angelo, Correggio, Cervantes and Boccacio—all lived near the beginning of their arts—perfected, and all but created them. These giant sons of genius stand indeed upon the earth; but they tower above their fellows; and the long line of their successors does not interpose any object to obstruct their view, or lessen their brightness. In strength and stature, they are unrivalled; in grace and beauty, they have never been surpassed. In after-ages and more refined periods (as they are called), great men have arisen one by one, as it were by throes and at intervals; though, in general, the best of these cultivated and artificial minds were of an inferior order; as Tasso and Pope among poets, Guido and Poussin among painters. But in the earlier stages of the arts, when the first mechanical difficulties had been got over, and the language acquired, they rose by clusters and in constellations—never so to rise again.

The arts of poetry and painting are conversant with the world of thought within us, and of the world of sense without us—with what we know and see and feel intimately. They flow from the living shrine of our own breasts, and are kindled at the living lamp of Nature: But the pulse of the passions assuredly beat as high—the depths and soundings of the human heart were as well understood, three thousand or three hundred years ago, as they are at present. The face of nature, and 'the human face divine,' shone as bright then, as they have ever done since. But it is their light, reflected by true genius on art, which marks out the path before it, and sheds a glory round the Muses' feet, like that which

——'circled Una's angel face,
And made a sunshine in the shady place.'

SCHLEGEL ON THE DRAMA

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The work is German; and is to be received with the allowances which that school of literature generally requires. With these, however, it will be found a good work: and as we should be sorry to begin our account of it with an unmeaning sneer, we will explain at once what appears to us to be the weak side of German literature. In all that they do, it is evident that they are much more influenced by a desire of distinction than by any impulse of the imagination, or the consciousness of extraordinary qualifications. They write, not because they are full of a subject, but because they think it is a subject upon which, with due pains and labour, something striking may be written. So they read and meditate,—and having, at length, devised some strange and paradoxical view of the matter, they set about establishing it with all their might and main. The consequence is, that they have no shades of opinion, but are always straining at a grand systematic conclusion. They have done a great deal, no doubt, and in various departments; but their pretensions have always much exceeded their performance. They are universal undertakers, and complete encyclopedists, in all moral and critical science. No question can come before them but they have a large apparatus of logical and metaphysical principles ready to play off upon it; and the less they know of the subject, the more formidable is the use they make of their apparatus. In poetry, they have at one time gone to the utmost lengths of violent effect,—and then turned round, with equal extravagance, to the laborious production of no effect at all. The truth is, that they are naturally a slow, heavy people; and can only be put in motion by some violent and often repeated impulse, under the operation of which they lose all control over themselves—and nothing can stop them short of the last absurdity. Truth, in their view of it, is never what *is*, but what, according to their system, *ought to be*. Though they have dug deeply in the mine of knowledge, they have too often confounded the dross and the ore, and counted their gains rather by their weight than their quality. They are a little apt, we suspect, literally to take the will for the deed,—and are not always capable of distinguishing between effort and success. They are most at home, accordingly, in matters of fact, and learned inquiries. In art they are hard, forced, and mechanical; and, generally, they may be said to have all that depends on strength of understanding and persevering exertion,—but to want ease, quick-

ness and flexibility. We should not have made these remarks, if the work before us had formed an absolute exception to them.

William Schlegel has long been celebrated on the Continent as a philosophical critic, and as the admirable translator of Shakespear and Calderon into his native tongue. Madame de Staël acknowledges her obligations to him, for the insight which he had given her into the discriminating features of German genius: And M. Sismondi, in his work on Southern literature, bears the most honourable testimony to his talents and learning. The present work contains a critical and historical account of the ancient and modern drama,—the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, the French, the English, the Spanish, and the German. The view which the author has taken of the standard productions, whether tragic or comic, in these different languages, is in general ingenious and just; and his speculative reasonings on the principles of taste, are often as satisfactory as they are profound. But he sometimes carries the love of theory, and the spirit of partisanship, farther than is at all allowable. His account of Shakespear is admirably characteristic, and must be highly gratifying to the English reader. It is indeed by far the best account which has been given of the plays of that great genius by any writer, either among ourselves, or abroad. It is only liable to one exception—he will allow Shakespear to have had no faults. Now, we think he had a great many, and that he could afford to have had as many more. It shows a distrust of his genius, to be tenacious of his defects.

Our author thus explains the object of his work—

'Before I proceed farther, I wish to say a few words respecting the spirit of my criticism—a study to which I have devoted a great part of my life. We see numbers of men, and even whole nations, so much fettered by the habits of their education and modes of living, that nothing appears natural, proper, or beautiful, which is foreign to their language, their manners, and their social relations. In this exclusive mode of seeing and feeling, it is no doubt possible, by means of cultivation, to attain a great nicety of discrimination in the narrow circle within which they are circumscribed. But no man can be a true critic or connoisseur, who does not possess a universality of mind,—who does not possess that flexibility which, throwing aside all personal predilections and blind habits, enables him to transport himself into the peculiarities of other ages and nations,—to feel them as it were from their proper and central point,—and to recognize and respect whatever is beautiful and grand under those external circumstances which are necessary to their existence, and which sometimes even seem to disguise them. There is no monopoly of

poetry for certain ages and nations; and consequently, that despotism in taste, by which it is attempted to make those rules universal, which were at first perhaps arbitrarily established, is a pretension which ought never to be allowed. Poetry, taken in its widest acceptation, as the power of creating what is beautiful, and representing it to the eye or ear, is a universal gift of Heaven; which is even shared to a certain extent by those whom we call barbarians and savages. Internal excellence is alone decisive; and where this exists, we must not allow ourselves to be repelled by external circumstances.

'It is well known, that, three centuries and a half ago, the study of ancient literature, by the diffusion of the Greek language (for the Latin was never extinct) received a new life: The classical authors were sought after with avidity, and made accessible by means of the press; and the monuments of ancient art were carefully dug up, and preserved. All this excited the human mind in a powerful manner, and formed a decided epoch in the history of our cultivation: the fruits have extended to our times, and will extend to a period beyond the power of our calculation. But the study of the ancients was immediately carried to a most pernicious excess. The learned, who were chiefly in possession of this knowledge, and who were incapable of distinguishing themselves by their own productions, yielded an unlimited deference to the ancients,—and with great appearance of reason, as they are models in their kind. They maintained, that nothing could be hoped for the human mind, but in the imitation of the ancients; and they only esteemed, in the works of the moderns, whatever resembled, or seemed to bear a resemblance, to those of antiquity. Every thing else was rejected by them as barbarous and unnatural. It was quite otherwise with the great poets and artists. However strong their enthusiasm for the ancients, and however determined their purpose of entering into competition with them, they were compelled by the characteristic peculiarity of their minds to proceed in a track of their own,—and to impress upon their productions the stamp of their own genius. Such was the case with Dante among the Italians, the father of modern poetry: he acknowledged Virgil for his instructor; but produced a work, which of all others differs the most from the Æneid, and *far excels it, in our opinion, in strength, truth, depth, and comprehension.* It was the same afterwards with Ariosto, who has been most unaccountably compared to Homer; for nothing can be more unlike. It was the same in the fine arts with Michael Angelo and Raphael, who were without doubt well acquainted with the antique. When we ground our judgment of modern painters merely

on their resemblance to the ancients, we must necessarily be unjust towards them. As the poets for the most part acquiesced in the doctrines of the learned, we may observe a curious struggle in them between their natural inclination and their imagined duty. When they sacrificed to the latter, they were praised by the learned; but, by yielding to their own inclinations, they became the favourites of the people. What preserves the heroic poems of a Tasso or a Camoens to this day alive, in the hearts and on the lips of their countrymen, is by no means their imperfect resemblance to Virgil or even to Homer,—but, in Tasso, the tender feeling of chivalrous love and honour, and in Camoens the glowing inspiration of patriotic heroism.'

The author next proceeds to unfold that which is the *nucleus* of the prevailing system of German criticism, and the foundation of his whole work, namely, the essential distinction between the peculiar spirit of the modern or *romantic* style of art, and the antique or *classical*. There is in this part of the work a singular mixture of learning, acuteness and mysticism. We have certain profound suggestions and distant openings to the light; but, every now and then, we are suddenly left in the dark, and obliged to grope our way by ourselves. We cannot promise to find a clue out of the labyrinth; but we will at least attempt it. The most obvious distinction between the two styles, the classical and the romantic, is, that the one is conversant with objects that are grand or beautiful in themselves, or in consequence of obvious and universal associations; the other, with those that are interesting only by the force of circumstances and imagination. A Grecian temple, for instance, is a classical object: it is beautiful in itself, and excites immediate admiration. But the ruins of a Gothic castle have no beauty or symmetry to attract the eye; and yet they excite a more powerful and romantic interest from the ideas with which they are habitually associated. If, in addition to this, we are told that this is Macbeth's castle, the scene of the murder of Duncan, the interest will be instantly heightened to a sort of pleasing horror. The classical idea or form of any thing, it may also be observed, remains always the same, and suggests nearly the same impressions; but the associations of ideas belonging to the romantic character, may vary infinitely, and take in the whole range of nature and accident. Antigone, in Sophocles, waiting near the grove of the Furies—Electra, in Æschylus, offering sacrifice at the tomb of Agamemnon—are classical subjects, because the circumstances and the characters have a correspondent dignity, and an immediate interest, from their mere designation. Florimel, in Spenser, where she is described sitting on the ground in the Witch's

hut, is not classical, though in the highest degree poetical and romantic: for the incidents and situation are in themselves mean and disagreeable, till they are redeemed by the genius of the poet, and converted, by the very contrast, into a source of the utmost pathos and elevation of sentiment. Othello's handkerchief is not classical, though 'there was magic in the web;'—it is only a powerful instrument of passion and imagination. Even Lear is not classical; for he is a poor crazy old man, who has nothing sublime about him but his afflictions, and who dies of a broken heart.

Schlegel somewhere compares the Furies of Æschylus to the Witches of Shakespear—we think without much reason. Perhaps Shakespear has surrounded the Weird Sisters with associations as terrible, and even more mysterious, strange, and fantastic than the Furies of Æschylus; but the traditionary beings themselves are not so petrific. These are of marble,—their look alone must blast the beholder;—those are of air, bubbles; and though 'so withered and so wild in their attire,' it is their spells alone which are fatal. They owe their power to 'metaphysical aid': but the others contain all that is dreadful in their corporal figures. In this we see the distinct spirit of the classical and the romantic mythology. The serpents that twine round the head of the Furies are not to be trifled with, though they implied no preternatural power: The bearded Witches in Macbeth are in themselves grotesque and ludicrous, except as this strange deviation from nature staggers our imagination, and leads us to expect and to believe in all incredible things. They appal the faculties by what they say or do;—the others are intolerable, even to sight.

Our author is right in affirming, that the true way to understand the plays of Sophocles and Æschylus, is to study them before the groupes of the Niobe or the Laocoon. If we can succeed in explaining this analogy, we shall have solved nearly the whole difficulty. For it is certain, that there are exactly the same powers of mind displayed in the poetry of the Greeks as in their statues. Their poetry is exactly what their sculptors might have written. Both are exquisite imitations of nature; the one in marble, the other in words. It is evident, that the Greek poets had the same perfect idea of the subjects they described, as the Greek sculptors had of the objects they represented; and they give as much of this absolute truth of imitation, as can be given by words. But, in this direct and simple imitation of nature, as in describing the form of a beautiful woman, the poet is greatly inferior to the sculptor: It is in the power of illustration, in comparing it to other things, and suggesting other ideas of beauty or love, that he has an entirely new source of imagination

opened to him; and of this power, the moderns have made at least a bolder and more frequent use than the ancients. The description of Helen in Homer, is a description of what might have happened and been seen, as 'that she moved with grace, and that the old men rose up with reverence as she passed;' the description of Belphœbe in Spenser, is a description of what was only visible to the eye of the poet.

> 'Upon her eyelids many graces sat,
> Under the shadow of her even brows.'

The description of the soldiers going to battle in Shakespear, 'all plumed like estriches, like eagles newly bathed, wanton as goats, wild as young bulls,' is too bold, figurative, and profuse of dazzling images, for the mild, equable tone of classical poetry, which never loses sight of the object in the illustration. The ideas of the ancients were too exact and definite, too much attached to the material form or vehicle in which they were conveyed, to admit of those rapid combinations, those unrestrained flights of fancy, which, glancing from heaven to earth, unite the most opposite extremes, and draw the happiest illustrations from things the most remote. The two principles of imitation and imagination indeed, are not only distinct, but almost opposite. For the imagination is that power which represents objects, not as they are, but as they are moulded according to our fancies and feelings. Let an object be presented to the senses in a state of agitation and fear—and the imagination will magnify the object, and convert it into whatever is most proper to encourage the fear. It is the same in all other cases in which poetry speaks the language of the imagination. This language is not the less true to nature because it is false in point of fact; but so much the more true and natural, if it conveys the impression which the object under the influence of passion makes on the mind. We compare a man of gigantic stature to a tower; not that he is any thing like so large, but because the excess of his size, beyond what we are accustomed to expect, produces a greater feeling of magnitude and ponderous strength than an object of ten times the same dimensions. Things, in short, are equal in the imagination, which have the power of affecting the mind with an equal degree of terror, admiration, delight or love. When Lear calls upon the Heavens to avenge his cause, 'for they are old like him,' there is nothing extravagant or impious in this sublime identification of his age with theirs; for there is no other image which could do justice to the agonising sense of his wrongs and his despair!

The great difference, then, which we find between the classical and the romantic style, between ancient and modern poetry, is, that

the one more frequently describes things as they are interesting in themselves,—the other for the sake of the associations of ideas connected with them; that the one dwells more on the immediate impressions of objects on the senses—the other on the ideas which they suggest to the imagination. The one is the poetry of form, the other of effect. The one gives only what is necessarily implied in the subject; the other all that can possibly arise out of it. The one seeks to identify the imitation with an external object,—clings to it,—is inseparable from it,—is either that or nothing; the other seeks to identify the original impression with whatever else, within the range of thought or feeling, can strengthen, relieve, adorn or elevate it. Hence the severity and simplicity of the Greek tragedy, which excluded everything foreign or unnecessary to the subject. Hence the unities: for, in order to identify the imitation as much as possible with the reality, and leave nothing to mere imagination, it was necessary to give the same coherence and consistency to the different parts of a story, as to the different limbs of a statue. Hence the beauty and grandeur of their materials; for, deriving their power over the mind from the truth of the imitation, it was necessary that the subject which they made choice of, and from which they could not depart, should be in itself grand and beautiful. Hence the perfection of their execution; which consisted in giving the utmost harmony, delicacy, and refinement to the details of a given subject. Now, the characteristic excellence of the moderns is the reverse of all this. As, according to our author, the poetry of the Greeks is the same as their sculpture; so, he says, our own more nearly resembles painting,—where the artist can relieve and throw back his figures at pleasure,—use a greater variety of contrasts,—and where light and shade, like the colours of fancy, are reflected on the different objects. The Muse of classical poetry should be represented as a beautiful naked figure: the Muse of modern poetry should be represented clothed, and with wings. The first has the advantage in point of form; the last in colour and motion.

Perhaps we may trace this difference to something analogous in physical organization, situation, religion and manners. First, the natural organization of the Greeks seems to have been more perfect, more susceptible of external impressions, and more in harmony with external nature than ours, who have not the same advantages of climate and constitution. Born of a beautiful and vigorous race, with quick senses and a clear understanding, and placed under a mild heaven, they gave the fullest development to their external faculties: and where all is perceived easily, every thing is perceived in harmony and proportion. It is the stern genius of the North which drives

men back upon their own resources, which makes them slow to perceive, and averse to feel, and which, by rendering them insensible to the single, successive impressions of things, requires their collective and combined force to rouse the imagination violently and unequally. It should be remarked, however, that the early poetry of some of the Eastern nations has even more of that irregularity, wild enthusiasm, and disproportioned grandeur, which has been considered as the distinguishing character of the Northern nations.

Again, a good deal may be attributed to the state of manners and political institutions. The ancient Greeks were warlike tribes encamped in cities. They had no other country than that which was enclosed within the walls of the town in which they lived. Each individual belonged, in the first instance, to the State; and his relations to it were so close, as to take away, in a great measure, all personal independence and free-will. Every one was mortised to his place in society, and had his station assigned him as part of the political machine, which could only subsist by strict subordination and regularity. Every man was as it were perpetually on duty, and his faculties kept constant watch and ward. Energy of purpose, and intensity of observation, became the necessary characteristics of such a state of society; and the general principle communicated itself from this ruling concern for the public, to morals, to art, to language, to every thing.—The tragic poets of Greece were among her best soldiers; and it is no wonder that they were as severe in their poetry as in their discipline. Their swords and their styles carved out their way with equal sharpness. This state of things was afterwards continued under the Roman empire. In the ages of chivalry and romance, which, after a considerable interval, succeeded its dissolution, and which have stamped their character on modern genius and literature, all was reversed. Society was again resolved into its component parts; and the world was, in a manner, to begin anew. The ties which bound the citizen and the soldier to the State being loosened, each person was thrown back, as it were, into the circle of the domestic affections, or left to pursue his doubtful way to fame and fortune alone. This interval of time might be accordingly supposed to give birth to all that was constant in attachment, adventurous in action, strange, wild and extravagant in invention. Human life took the shape of a busy, voluptuous dream, where the imagination was now lost amidst 'antres vast and deserts idle;' or, suddenly transported to stately palaces, echoing with dance and song. In this uncertainty of events, this fluctuation of hopes and fears, all objects became dim, confused and vague. Magicians, dwarfs, giants, followed in the train of romance; and Orlando's enchanted sword, the horn

which he carried with him, and which he blew thrice at Roncesvalles, and Rogero's winged horse, were not sufficient to protect them in their unheard-of encounters, or deliver them from their inextricable difficulties. It was a return to the period of the early heroic ages; but tempered by the difference of domestic manners, and the spirit of religion. The marked difference in the relation of the sexes, arose from the freedom of choice in women, which, from being the slaves of the will and passions of men, converted them into the arbiters of their fate, which introduced the modern system of gallantry, and first made love a feeling of the heart, founded on mutual affection and esteem. The leading virtues of the Christian religion, self-denial and generosity, assisted in producing the same effect.—Hence the spirit of chivalry, of romantic love, and honour!

The mythology of the romantic poetry differed from the received religion: both differed essentially from the classical. The religion, or mythology of the Greeks, was nearly allied to their poetry: it was material and definite. The Pagan system reduced the Gods to the human form, and elevated the powers of inanimate nature to the same standard. Statues carved out of the finest marble, represented the objects of their religious worship in airy porticos, in solemn temples and consecrated groves. Mercury was seen 'new-lighted on some heaven-kissing hill;' and the Naiad or Dryad came gracefully forth as the personified genius of the stream or wood. All was subjected to the senses. The Christian religion, on the contrary, is essentially spiritual and abstract; it is 'the evidence of things unseen.' In the Heathen mythology, form is everywhere predominant; in the Christian, we find only unlimited, undefined power. The imagination alone 'broods over the immense abyss, and makes it pregnant.' There is, in the habitual belief of an universal, invisible Principle of all things, a vastness and obscurity which confounds our perceptions, while it exalts our piety. A mysterious awe surrounds the doctrines of the Christian faith: the Infinite is everywhere before us, whether we turn to reflect on what is revealed to us of the Divine nature or our own.

History, as well as religion, has contributed to enlarge the bounds of imagination; and both together, by showing past and future objects at an interminable distance, have accustomed the mind to contemplate and take an interest in the obscure and shadowy. The ancients were more circumscribed within 'the ignorant present time,'—spoke only their own language,—were conversant only with their own customs, —were acquainted only with the events of their own history. The mere lapse of time then, aided by the art of printing, has served to accumulate for us an endless mass of mixed and contradictory

materials; and, by extending our knowledge to a greater number of things, has made our particular ideas less perfect and distinct. The constant reference to a former state of manners and literature, is a marked feature in modern poetry. We are always talking of the Greeks and Romans;—*they* never said any thing of us. This circumstance has tended to give a certain abstract elevation, and etherial refinement to the mind, without strengthening it. We are lost in wonder at what has been done, and dare not think of emulating it. The earliest modern poets, accordingly, may be conceived to hail the glories of the antique world, dawning through the dark abyss of time; while revelation, on the other hand, opened its path to the skies: As Dante represents himself as conducted by Virgil to the shades below; while Beatrice welcomes him to the abodes of the blest.

We must now return, however, to our author, whose sketch of the rise and progress of the Drama, will be interesting to our readers.

'The invention of the dramatic art, and of a theatre, seem to lie very near one another. Man has a great disposition to mimicry. When he enters vividly into the situation, sentiments and passions of others, he even involuntarily puts on a resemblance to them in his gestures. Children are perpetually going out of themselves: it is one of their chief amusements to represent those grown people whom they have had an opportunity of observing, or whatever comes in their way: And with the happy flexibility of their imagination, they can exhibit all the characteristics of assumed dignity in a father, a schoolmaster, or a king. The sole step which is requisite for the invention of a drama, namely, the separating and extracting the mimetic elements and fragments from social life, and representing them collected together into one mass, has not, however, been taken in many nations. In the very minute description of ancient Egypt in Herodotus and other writers, I do not recollect observing the smallest trace of it. The Etrurians, again, who in many respects resembled the Egyptians, had their theatrical representations; and, what is singular enough, the Etruscan name for an actor, *histrio*, is preserved in living languages down to the present day. The Arabians and Persians, though possessed of a rich poetical literature, are unacquainted with any sort of drama. It was the same with Europe in the middle ages. On the introduction of Christianity, the plays handed down among the Greeks and Romans were abolished, partly from their reference to Heathen ideas, and partly because they had degenerated into the most impudent and indecent immorality; and they were not again revived till after the lapse of nearly a thousand

years. Even in the fourteenth century, we do not find in Boccacio, who, however, gives us a most accurate picture of the whole constitution of social life, the smallest trace of plays. In place of them, they had then only story-tellers, minstrels, and jugglers. On the other hand, we are by no means entitled to assume, that the invention of the drama has only once taken place in the world, or that it has always been borrowed by one people from another. The English navigators mention, that among the islanders of the South Seas, who, in every mental acquirement, are in such a low scale of civilization, they yet observed a rude drama, in which a common event in life was imitated for the sake of diversion. And to go to the other extreme :—Among the Indians, the people from whom, perhaps, all the cultivation of the human race has been derived, plays were known long before they could have experienced any foreign influence. It has lately been made known to Europe, that they have a rich dramatic literature, which ascends back for more than two thousand years. The only specimen of their plays (*nataks*) hitherto known to us, is the delightful sakontala, which, notwithstanding the colouring of a foreign climate, bears, in its general structure, such a striking resemblance to our romantic drama, that we might be inclined to suspect we owe this resemblance to the predilection for Shakespear entertained by Jones the English translator, if his fidelity were not confirmed by other learned Orientalists. In the golden times of India, the representation of this *natak* served to delight the splendid imperial court of Delhi; but it would appear that, from the misery of numberless oppressions, the dramatic art in that country is now entirely at an end. The Chinese, again, have their standing national theatre, stationary perhaps in every sense of the word; and I do not doubt that, in the establishment of arbitary rules, and the delicate observance of insignificant points of decorum, they leave the most correct Europeans very far behind them. When the new European stage, in the fifteenth century, had its origin in the allegorical and spiritual pieces called Moralities and Mysteries, this origin was not owing to the influence of the ancient dramatists, who did not come into circulation till some time afterwards. In those rude beginnings lay the germ of the romantic drama as a peculiar invention.' p. 28.

The fault of this book is to have too much of every thing, but especially of Greece; and we cannot help feeling, that the bold and independent judgment which the author has applied to all other nations, is somewhat suborned or overawed by his excessive veneration for those ancient classics. There is a glow and a force, however, in all that he says upon the subject, that almost persuades us that he is in the right,—and that there was something incomparably more lofty

in the conceptions of those early times, than the present undignified and degenerate age can imagine. This imposing and enthusiastic tone discloses itself in his introductory remarks on the Grecian theatre.

'When we hear the word theatre,' he says, 'we naturally think of what with us bears the same name; and yet nothing can be more different from our theatre than the Grecian, in every part of its construction. If, in reading the Greek pieces, we associate our own stage with them, the light in which we shall view them must be false in every respect.—The theatres of the Greeks were quite open above, and their dramas were always acted in open day, and beneath the canopy of heaven. The Romans, at an after period, endeavoured by a covering to shelter the audience from the rays of the sun; but this degree of luxury was hardly ever enjoyed by the Greeks. Such a state of things appears very inconvenient to us: But the Greeks had nothing of effeminacy about them; and we must not forget, too, the beauty of their climate. When they were overtaken by a storm or a shower, the play was of course interrupted; and they would much rather expose themselves to an accidental inconvenience, than, by shutting themselves up in a close and crowded house, entirely destroy the serenity of a religious solemnity, which their plays certainly were. To have covered in the scene itself, and imprisoned gods and heroes in dark and gloomy apartments, imperfectly lighted up, would have appeared still more ridiculous to them. An action which so nobly served to establish the belief of the relation with heaven, could only be exhibited under an unobstructed sky, and under the very eyes of the gods, as it were, for whom, according to Seneca, the sight of a brave man struggling with adversity is an attractive spectacle. The theatres of the ancients were, in comparison with the small scale of ours, of a colossal magnitude, partly for the sake of containing the whole of the people, with the concourse of strangers who flocked to the festivals, and partly to correspond with the majesty of the dramas represented in them, which required to be seen at a respectful distance.'

One of the most elaborate and interesting parts of this work, is the account of the Greek tragedians, which is given in the fourth Lecture. Our extracts from it will be copious, both on account of the importance of the subject, and the ability with which it is treated.

'Of the inexhaustible stores possessed by the Greeks in the department of tragedy, which the public competition at the Athenian festivals called into being, as the rival poets always contended for a prize, very little indeed has come down to us. We only possess

works of three of their numerous tragedians, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; and these in no proportion to the number of their compositions. The three authors in question were selected by the Alexandrian critics as the foundation for the study of ancient Greek literature, not because they alone were deserving of estimation, but because they afforded the best illustration of the various styles of tragedy. Of each of the two oldest poets, we have seven remaining pieces; in these, however, we have, according to the testimony of the ancients, several of their most distinguished productions. Of Euripides, we have a much greater number, and we might well exchange many of them for other works which are now lost; for example, the Satirical Dramas of Actæus, Æschylus and Sophocles; several pieces of Phrynichus, for the sake of comparison with Æschylus; or of Agathon, whom Plato describes as effeminate, but sweet and affecting, and who was a contemporary of Euripides, though somewhat younger.

'The tragic style of Æschylus is grand, severe, and not unfrequently hard. In the style of Sophocles, we observe the most complete proportion and harmonious sweetness. The style of Euripides is soft and luxuriant: Extravagant in his easy fulness, he sacrifices the general effect to brilliant passages.

'Æschylus is to be considered as the creator of Tragedy, which sprung from him completely armed, like Pallas from the head of Jupiter. He clothed it in a state of suitable dignity, and gave it an appropriate place of exhibition. He was the inventor of scenic pomp; and not only instructed the chorus in singing and dancing, but appeared himself in the character of a player. He was the first who gave development to the dialogue, and limits to the lyrical part of the tragedy, which still however occupies too much space in his pieces. He draws his characters with a few bold and strongly marked features. The plans are simple in the extreme. He did not understand the art of enriching and varying an action, and dividing its development and catastrophe into parts, bearing a due proportion to each other. Hence his action often stands still; and this circumstance becomes still more apparent, from the undue extension of his choral songs. But all his poetry betrays a sublime and serious mind. Terror is his element, and not the softer affections: he holds up the head of Medusa to his astonished spectators. His manner of treating Fate is austere in the extreme; he suspends it over the heads of mortals in all its gloomy majesty. The Cothurnus of Æschylus has, as it were, an iron weight; gigantic figures alone stalk before our eyes. It seems as if it required an effort in him to condescend to paint mere men to us: he abounds most in the repre-

sentation of gods, and seems to dwell with particular delight in exhibiting the Titans, those ancient gods who typify the dark powers of primitive nature, and who had long been driven into Tartarus, beneath a better regulated world. He endeavours to swell out his language to a gigantic sublimity, corresponding with the standard of his characters. Hence he abounds in harsh combinations and overstrained epithets; and the lyrical parts of his pieces are often obscure in the extreme, from the involved nature of the construction. He resembles Dante and Shakespeare in the very singular cast of his images and expressions. These images are nowise deficient in the terrible graces, which almost all the writers of antiquity celebrate in Æschylus. He flourished in the very first vigour of the Grecian freedom; was an eyewitness of the overthrow and annihilation of the Persian hosts under Darius and Xerxes; and, in one of his pieces—the Persians—describes in the most vivid and glowing colours the battle of Salamis.' p. 94.

Such is the general account of Æschylus given by our author. He then proceeds to give a distinct sketch of each of his tragedies. This, we will acknowledge, appears to us considerably too rapturous and too long;—but we must give our readers a specimen of what is perhaps the most elaborate, if not the most impressive part of the whole publication. We shall select his account of the Eumenides or Furies, the most terrible of all this poet's compositions.

'The fable of the Eumenides is the justification and absolution of Orestes from his bloody crime, the murder of Clytemnestra his mother. It is a trial, but a trial where the gods are accusers and defenders and judges; and the manner in which the subject is treated, corresponds with its majesty and importance. The scene itself brought before the eyes of the Greeks the highest objects of veneration which were known to them. It opens before the celebrated temple at Delphi, which occupies the back-ground. The aged Pythia enters in sacerdotal pomp, addresses her prayers to the gods who preside over the oracle, harangues the assembled people, and goes into the temple to seat herself on the tripod. She returns full of consternation, and describes what she has seen in the temple; a man stained with blood, supplicating protection, surrounded by sleeping women with serpent hair. She then makes her exit by the same entrance. Apollo now appears with Orestes in his traveller's garb, and a sword and olive branch in his hands. He promises him his farther protection, commands him to fly to Athens, and recommends him to the care of the present but invisible Mercury, to whom travellers, and especially those who were under the necessity of concealing their journey, were usually consigned. Orestes goes off

at the side allotted to strangers; Apollo re-enters the temple, which remains open, and the Furies are seen in the interior sleeping on their seats. Clytemnestra now ascends through the orchestra, and appears on the stage. We are not to suppose her a haggard skeleton, but a figure with the appearance of life, though paler, still bearing her wounds in her breast, and shrouded in ethereal-coloured vestments. She calls repeatedly to the Furies in the language of vehement reproach; and then disappears. The Furies awake; and when they no longer find Orestes, they dance in wild commotion round the stage during the choral song. Apollo returns from the temple, and expels them from his sanctuary as profanatory beings. *We may here suppose him appearing with the sublime displeasure of the Apollo of the Vatican, with bow and quiver, or clothed in his sacred tunic and chlamys.* The scene now changes; but the back-ground probably remained unchanged, and had now to represent the temple of Minerva on the hill of Mars; and the lateral decorations would be converted into Athens and the surrounding landscape. Orestes comes as from another land, and embraces as a suppliant the statue of Pallas placed before the temple. The chorus (who were clothed in black, with purple girdles, and serpents in their hair), follow him on foot to this place, but remain throughout the rest of the piece beneath in the orchestra. The Furies had at first exhibited the rage of beasts of prey at the escape of their victim; but they now sing with tranquil dignity their high and terrible office among mortals, claim the head of Orestes as forfeited to them, and consecrate it with mysterious charms of endless pain. Pallas, the warlike virgin, appears in a chariot and four at the intercession of the suppliant. She listens with calm dignity to the mutual complaints of Orestes and his adversaries, and finally undertakes the office of umpire at the solicitation of the two parties. The assembled judges take their seats on the steps of the temple; the herald commands silence among the people by sound of trumpet, as at an actual tribunal. Apollo advances to advocate the cause of the youth; the Furies in vain oppose his interference; and the arguments for and against the deed are gone through in short speeches. The judges throw their calculi into the urn; Pallas throws in a white one; all are wrought up to the highest pitch of expectation; Orestes calls out, full of anguish, to his protector: "*O Phœbus Apollo, how is the cause decided?*"—The Furies on the other hand, exclaim—"*O Black Night, mother of all things, dost thou behold this?*" In the enumeration of the black and white pebbles, they are found equal in number, and the accused is therefore declared by Pallas acquitted of the charge. He breaks out into joyful expressions of thanks, while the Furies declaim against the arrogance of

the younger gods, who take such liberties with the race of Titan. Pallas bears their rage with equanimity; addresses them in the language of kindness, and even of veneration; and these beings, so untractable in their general disposition, are unable to withstand the power of her mild and convincing eloquence. They promise to bless the land over which she has dominion; while Pallas assigns them a sanctuary in the Attic territory, where they are to be called the Eumenides, that is, the Benevolent. The whole ends with a solemn procession round the theatre, with songs of invocation; while bands of children, women, and old men, in purple robes and with torches in their hands, accompany the Furies in their exit.' p. 104.

The situation of Orestes at the opening of this tragedy, with the Furies lying asleep on the floor, like aged women, with serpent hair, is perhaps the most terrible that can be conceived. But yet, in this situation, dreadful as it is—the sense of power; the representation of preternatural forms; the sacredness of the place; the momentary suspense of the action; the death-like stillness; the expectation of what is to come, subdue the spirit to a tone of awful tranquillity, and, from the depth of despair, produce a lofty grandeur and collectedness of mind.

If this extraordinary play be the most terrible of Æschylus's works, the Chained Prometheus is the grandest. It is less a tragedy than an ode. It does not describe a series of actions, but a succession of visions. Prometheus, chained to a rock on the verge of the world, holds parley with the original powers and oldest forms of Nature, with Strength and Violence, and Oceanus and the race of the Titans. Compared with the personages introduced in this poem, Jupiter and Mercury, and the rest of that class, appear mere modern deities; we are thrown back into the first rude chaos of Nature, where the universe itself seems to rock like the sea, and the empire of heaven was not yet fixed.

'Prometheus,' says our author, 'is an image of human nature itself; endowed with a miserable foresight, and bound down to a narrow existence, without an ally, and with nothing to oppose to the combined and inexorable powers of Nature, but an unshaken will, and the consciousness of elevated claims. The other poems of the Greek tragedians are single tragedies; but this may be called tragedy itself; its purest spirit is revealed with all the overpowering influence of its first unmitigated austerity.'

We agree with M. Schlegel, when he says, that 'there is little external action in this piece: Prometheus merely suffers and resolves from the beginning to the end.' But we cannot assent to his assertion, that 'the poet has contrived, in a masterly manner, to introduce variety into that which was in itself determinate.' All that is fine in

it, is the abstract conception of the characters: The story is as uninteresting, as it is inartificial and improbable.

The Seven before Thebes has also a very imperfect dramatic form. It is for the most part only a narrative or descriptive dialogue passing between two persons, the King and the Messenger. 'The description of the attack with which the city is threatened,' says our critic, 'and of the seven leaders who have sworn its destruction, and who display their arrogance in the symbols borne on their shields, is an epic subject, clothed in the pomp of tragedy.' The Agamemnon and Electra are the two tragedies of Æschylus, which approach the nearest to the perfection of the dramatic form, and which will bear an immediate comparison with those of Sophocles on the same subjects. M. Schlegel has drawn a detailed and very admirable parallel between the two poets. Sophocles, he observes, is the more elegant painter of outward forms and manners; but Æschylus catches most of the enthusiasm of the passion he describes, and communicates to the reader the lofty impulses of his own mind. In giving a poetical colouring to objects from the suggestions of his own genius—in describing not so much things themselves, as the impression which they make on the imagination in a state of strong excitement, he more nearly resembles some of the modern poets, than any of his countrymen. The magnificent opening of the Agamemnon, in which the watchman describes the appearance of the fires for which he had watched ten long years, as the signal of the destruction of Troy, might be cited as an instance of that rich and varied style, which gives something over the bare description of the subject, and luxuriates in the display of its own powers. The Ajax of Sophocles comes the nearest to the general style of Æschylus, both in the nakedness of the subject, and the poetical interest given to the character.

The account of Sophocles, which is next in order, is one of the most finished and interesting parts of this work: though it is disfigured by one extraordinary piece of rhodomontade, too characteristic to be omitted. After observing that Sophocles lived to be upwards of ninety years of age, our philosophical German breaks out into the following mystic strain.

'It would seem as if the Gods, in return for his dedicating himself at an early age to Bacchus as the giver of all joy, and the author of the cultivation of the human race, by the representation of tragical dramas for his festivals, had wished to confer immortality on him, so long did they delay the hour of his death; but, as this was impossible, they extinguished his life at least as gently as possible, that he might imperceptibly change one immortality for another—the long duration of his earthly existence for an imperishable name.' p. 117.

We cannot afford to enter into the detailed critique which M. Schlegel has here offered upon the several plays of this celebrated author. The following passage exhibits a more summary view of them. After mentioning the native sweetness for which he was so celebrated among his contemporaries, he observes—

'Whoever is thoroughly imbued with the feeling of this property, may flatter himself that a sense for ancient art has arisen within him: for the lovers of the affected sentimentality of the present day would, both in the representation of bodily sufferings, and in the language and economy of the tragedies of Sophocles, find much of an insupportable austerity. When we consider the great fertility of Sophocles, for, according to some, he wrote a hundred and thirty pieces, and eighty according to the most moderate account, we cannot help wondering that seven only should have come down to us. Chance, however, has so far favoured us, that, in these seven pieces, we find several which were held by the ancients as his greatest works, Antigone, for example, Electra, and the two Œdipuses; and these have also come down to us tolerably free from mutilation and corruption in the text. The first Œdipus and Philoctetes have been generally, without any good reason, preferred to all the others by the modern critics: the first, on account of the artifice of the plot, in which the dreadful catastrophe, powerfully calculated to excite our curiosity (a rare case in the Greek tragedies), is brought about inevitably, by a succession of causes, all dependent on one another: the latter, on account of the masterly display of character, the beautiful contrast observable in the three leading individuals, and the simple structure of the piece, in which, with so few persons, every thing proceeds from the truest motives. But the whole of the tragedies of Sophocles are conspicuous for their separate excellences. In Antigone we have the purest display of female heroism; in Ajax the manly feeling of honour in its whole force; in the Trachiniæ, the female levity of Dejanira is beautifully atoned for by her death; and the sufferings of Hercules are pourtrayed with suitable dignity. Electra is distinguished for energy and pathos; in Œdipus Coloneus there prevails the mildest emotion, and over the whole piece there is diffused the utmost sweetness. I will not undertake to weigh the respective merits of these pieces against each other; but I am free to confess that I entertain a singular predilection for the last of them, as it appears to me the most expressive of the personal feelings of the poet himself. As this piece was written for the very purpose of throwing a lustre upon Athens, and the spot of his birth more particularly, he appears to have laboured it with a remarkable degree of fondness.' p. 123.

In describing the Œdipus Coloneus, M. Schlegel has strikingly, and, we think, beautifully, exemplified the distinct genius of Sophocles and Æschylus, in the use these two poets make of the Furies.

'In Æschylus,' he says, 'before the victim of persecution can be saved, the hellish horror of the Furies must congeal the blood of the spectator, and make his hair stand on end; and the whole rancour of these goddesses of rage must be exhausted. The transition to their peaceful retreat is therefore the more astonishing: It seems as if the whole human race were redeemed from their power. In Sophocles, however, they do not even once make their appearance, but are altogether kept in the back-ground; and they are not called by their proper name, but made known to us by descriptions, in which they are a good deal spared. But even this obscurity and distance, so suitable to these daughters of Night, is calculated to excite in us a still dread, in which the bodily senses have no part. The clothing the grove of the Furies with all the charms of a southern spring, completes the sweetness of the poem: and were I to select an emblem of the poetry of Sophocles from his tragedies, I should describe it as a sacred grove of the dark goddesses of Fate, in which the laurel, the olive, and the vine, display their luxuriant vegetation, and the song of the nightingale is for ever heard.' p. 128.

After all, however, the tragedies of Sophocles, which are the perfection of the classical style, are hardly tragedies in our sense of the word. They do not exhibit the extremity of human passion and suffering. The object of modern tragedy is to represent the soul utterly subdued as it were, or at least convulsed and overthrown by passion or misfortune. That of the ancients was to show how the greatest crimes could be perpetrated with the least remorse, and the greatest calamities borne with the least emotion. Firmness of purpose, and calmness of sentiment, are their leading characteristics. Their heroes and heroines act and suffer as if they were always in the presence of a higher power, or as if human life itself were a religious ceremony, performed in honour of the Gods and of the State. The mind is not shaken to its centre; the whole being is not crushed or broken down. Contradictory motives are not accumulated; the utmost force of imagination and passion is not exhausted to overcome the repugnance of the will to crime; the contrast and combination of outward accidents are not called in to overwhelm the mind with the whole weight of unexpected calamity. The dire conflict of the feelings, the desperate struggle with fortune, are seldom there. All is conducted with a fatal composure. All is prepared and submitted to with inflexible constancy, as if Nature were only an instrument in the hands of Fate.

It is for deviating from this ideal standard, and for a nearer approximation to the frailty of human passion, that our author falls foul of Euripides without mercy. There is a great deal of affectation and mysticism in what he says on this subject. Allowing that the excellences of Euripides are not the same as those of Æschylus and Sophocles, or even that they are excellences of an inferior order, yet it does not follow that they are defects. The luxuriance and effeminacy with which he reproaches the style of Euripides might have been defects in those writers; but they are essential parts of his system. In fact, as Æschylus differs from Sophocles in giving greater scope to the impulses of the imagination, so Euripides differs from him in giving greater indulgence to the feelings of the heart. The heart is the seat of pure affection,—of involuntary emotion,—of feelings brooding over and nourished by themselves. In the dramas of Sophocles, there is no want of these feelings; but they are suppressed or suspended by the constant operation of the senses and the will. Beneath the rigid muscles by which the heart is there braced, there is no room left for those bursts of uncontrollable feeling, which dissolve it in tenderness, or plunge it into the deepest woe. In the heroic tragedy, no one dies of a broken heart,—scarcely a sigh is heaved, or a tear shed. Euripides has relaxed considerably from this extreme self-possession; and it is on that account that our critic cannot forgive him. The death of Alcestis alone might have disarmed his severity.

This play, which is the most beautiful of them all,—the Iphigenia, which is the next to it,—the Phædra and Medea, which are more objectionable, both from the nature of the subject, and the inferiority of the execution, are instances of the occasional use which Euripides made of the conflict of different passions. Though Antigone, in Sophocles, is in love with Hæmon, and though there was here an evident opportunity, and almost a necessity, for introducing a struggle between this passion, which was an additional motive to attach her to life, and her affection to the memory of her brother, which led her to sacrifice it, the poet has carefully avoided taking any advantage of the circumstance. Such is the spirit of the heroic tragedy, which suffers no other motives to interfere with the calm determination of the will, and which admits of nothing complicated in the development, either of the passions or the story! M. Schlegel decidedly prefers the Hippolytus of Euripides to the Phædra of Racine. His reasons he gives in another work, which we have not seen; but we are not at a loss to guess at them. His taste for poetry is just the reverse of the popular: He has a horror of whatever obtrudes itself violently on the notice, or tells at first sight; and is only disposed to

admire those retired and recondite beauties which hide themselves from all but the eye of deep discernment. He relishes most those qualities in an author which require the greatest sagacity in the critic to find them out,—as none but connoisseurs are fond of the taste of olives. We shall say nothing here of the choice of the subject; but such as it is, Racine has met it more fully and directly: Euripides exhibits it, for the most part, in the back-ground. The Hippolytus is a dramatic fragment in which the principal events are given in a narrative form. The additions which Racine has chiefly borrowed from Seneca to fill up the outline, are, we think, unquestionable improvements. The declaration of love, to which our author particularly objects, is, however, much more gross and unqualified in Racine than in Seneca. The modern additions to the Iphigenia in Aulis, by Racine, as the love between Achilles and Iphigenia, and the jealousy of Eriphile, certainly destroy the propriety of costume, as M. Schlegel has observed, without heightening the tragic interest. In other respects, the French play is little more than an elegant, flowing, and somewhat diffuse paraphrase of the Greek. The most striking example of pathos in it is the '*Tu y seras, ma fille,*' addressed by Agamemnon to his daughter, in answer to her wish to be present at the sacrifice, of which she is herself the destined victim.

Euripides was the model of Racine among the French, as he was of Seneca among the Romans. The remarks which Schlegel makes on this last-mentioned author are exceedingly harsh, dogmatical, and intolerant. They are as bad, and worse, than the sentence pronounced by Cowley on

——'The dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca.'

Hear what he says of him.

'But whatever period may have given birth to the tragedies of Seneca, they are beyond description bombastical and frigid, unnatural in character and action—revolting, from their violation of every propriety—and so destitute of every thing like theatrical effect—that I am inclined to believe they were never destined to leave the rhetorical schools for the stage. Every tragical common-place is spun out to the very last; all is phrase; and even the most common remark is delivered in stilted language. The most complete poverty of sentiment is dressed out with wit and acuteness. There is even a display of fancy in them, *or at least a phantom of it*; for they contain an example of the misapplication of every mental faculty. The author or authors have found out the secret of being diffuse, even to wearisomeness; and at the same time so epigrammatically laconic, as to be often obscure and unintelligible. Their characters are neither ideal nor

actual beings, but gigantic puppets, who are at one time put in motion by the string of an unnatural heroism, and, at another, by that of passions equally unnatural, which no guilt nor enormity can appal.'—'Yet not merely learned men, without a feeling for art, have judged favourably of them, nay preferred them to the Greek tragedies, but even poets have accounted them deserving of their study and imitation. The influence of Seneca on Corneille's idea of tragedy cannot be mistaken: Racine, too, in his Phædra, has condescended to borrow a good deal from him; and, among other things, nearly the whole of the declaration of love, of all which we have an enumeration in Brumoy.'

The distaste of our learned critic to Euripides is sanctioned, no doubt, by the ridicule of Aristophanes, from whom he gives a whole scene, in which a buffoon comes to the tragic poet, to beg his rags, his alms-basket, and his water-pitcher, in allusion to the homeliness of costume, and the outward signs of distress which are sometimes exhibited in his tragedies. Aristophanes, of course, is an immense favourite with Schlegel—though it requires all his ingenuity to gloss over and allegorize his extravagance and indecency.

'The plays of Peace, the Acharnæ and Lysistrata, will be found to recommend peace. In the Clouds, he laughs at the metaphysics of the sophists; in the Wasps, at the rage of the Athenians for hearing and determining lawsuits. The subject of the Frogs is the decline of the tragic art; and Plutus is an allegory on the unjust distribution of wealth. The Birds are, of all his pieces, the one *of which the aim is the least apparent; and it is on that very account one of the most diverting*.' p. 213.

The comedies of Aristophanes, we confess, put the *archaism* of our taste, and the soundness of our classic faith to a most severe test. The great difficulty is not so much to understand their meaning, as to comprehend their species—to know to what possible class to assign them—of what nondescript productions of nature or art they are to be considered as anomalies. According to Schlegel, who might be styled the Œdipus of criticism, they are the perfection of *the old comedy*. There is much virtue, we are aware, in that appellation: But to us, we confess, they appear to be neither comedies, nor farces, nor satires—but monstrous allegorical pantomimes—enormous practical jokes—far-fetched puns, represented by ponderous machinery, which staggers the imagination at its first appearance, and breaks down before it has answered its purpose. They show, in a more striking point of view than any thing else, the extreme subtlety of understanding of the ancients, and their appetite for the gross, the material, and the sensible. Compared with Aristophanes, Rabelais himself is plain and literal. For example—

'Peace begins in the most spirited and lively manner: The tranquilly-disposed Trygæus rides on a dunghill beetle to heaven, in the manner of Bellerophon: War, a desolating giant, with Tumult his companion, in place of all the other gods, inhabits Olympus, and pounds the cities in a great mortar, making use of the celebrated generals as pestles; Peace lies bound in a deep well, and is dragged up by a rope, through the united efforts of all the Greek states,' &c.

Again—

'It is said of a man addicted to unintelligible reveries, that he is up in the clouds:—accordingly Socrates, in the play of the *Clouds*, is actually let down in a basket at his first appearance.'

The comic machinery in Aristophanes, is, for the most part, a parody on the Greek mythology, and his wit a travestie on Euripides. Whatever we may think of his talent in this way, the art itself of making sense into nonsense, and of letting down the sublime into the ludicrous, in general is rather a cheap one, and implies much more a want of feeling than an excess of wit.

The account which is given of the *old*, the *middle*, and the *new comedy*, is very learned and dogmatical. The different styles and authors rise in value with the critic, in proportion as he knows nothing of them. He likes that, which some old commentator has praised, better than what he has read himself; and that still better, which neither he himself, nor any one else, has read. Diphilus, Philemon, Apollodorus, Menander, Sophron, and the Sicilian Epicharmus, whose works are lost, are prodigiously great men; and the author, 'tries conclusions infinite' respecting their different possible merits. On the contrary, Terence is only half a Menander, and Plautus a coarse buffoon. In spite, however, of this fastidiousness, he cannot deny the elegant humanity of the one, nor the strong native humour of the other. The style of these writers, particularly that of Terence, is admirable for a certain conversational ease, and correct simplicity, exactly in the mid-way between carelessness and affectation. But M. Schlegel has a mode of doing away this merit, by observing, that

'Plautus and Terence were among the most ancient Roman writers, and belonged to a time when the language of books was hardly yet in existence, and when every thing was drawn fresh from life. This *naïve* simplicity had its charms in the eyes of those Romans, who belonged to the period of learned cultivation; but it was much more a natural gift, than the fruit of poetical art.'

We shall conclude this part of the subject, with his observations on the nature and range of the characters introduced into the ancient Comedy.

'Athens, where the fictitious, as well as the actual scenes, were generally placed, was the centre of a small territory; and in nowise to be compared with our great cities, either in extent or population. The republican equality admitted no marked distinction of ranks: There were no proper nobility; all were alike citizens, richer or poorer; and, for the most part, had no other occupation, than that of managing their properties. Hence the Attic comedy could not well admit of the contrasts arising from diversity of tone and conversation; it generally continues in a sort of middle state, and has something citizen-like; nay, if I may so say, something of the manners of a small town about it, which we do not see in those comedies, in which the manners of a court, and the refinement or corruption of monarchial capitals, are pourtrayed.

'From what has been premised, we may at once see nearly the whole circle of characters; nay, those which perpetually occur, are so few, that they may almost all of them be here enumerated. The austere and frugal, or the mild and yielding father, the latter not unfrequently under the dominion of his wife, and making common cause with his son; the housewife, either loving and sensible, or obstinate and domineering, and proud of the accession brought by her to the family-property; the giddy and extravagant, but open and amiable, young man, who, even in a passion, sensual at its very commencement, is capable of true attachment; the vivacious girl, who is either thoroughly depraved, vain, cunning and selfish—or well-disposed, and susceptible of higher emotions; the simple and boorish, or the cunning slave, who assists his young master to deceive his old father, and obtain money for the gratification of his passions by all manner of tricks; the flatterer, or accommodating parasite, who, for the sake of a good meal, is ready to say or do any thing that may be required of him; the sycophant, a man whose business it was to set quietly-disposed people by the ears, and stir up lawsuits, for which he offered his services; the braggart soldier, who returns from foreign service, generally cowardly and simple, but who assumes airs from the fame of the deeds performed by him abroad; and, lastly, a servant, or pretended mother, who preaches up a bad system of morals to the young girl entrusted to her guidance; and the slave-dealer, who speculates on the extravagant passions of young people, and knows no other object than the furtherance of his own selfish views. The two last characters are to our feelings a blemish in the new Grecian comedy; but it was impossible, from the manner in which it was constituted, to dispense with them.' p. 263.

We must now pass on to modern literature.—Of the Italian drama, which is the least prolific part of their literature, we shall shortly

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have to speak with reference to another work; and shall at present proceed to our author's account of the French Theatre, which forms a class by itself, and which is here most ably analyzed.

'With respect to the earlier tragical attempts of the French in the last half of the sixteenth, and the first part of the seventeenth century, we refer to Fontenelle, La Harpe, the *Melanges Litteraires* of Suard and Andre. Our chief object is an examination of the system of tragic art, practically followed by their later poets; and by them partly, but by the French critics universally, considered as alone entitled to any authority, and every deviation from it viewed as a sin against good taste. If the system is in itself the best, we shall be compelled to allow that its execution is masterly, perhaps not to be surpassed. But the great question here is, how far the French tragedy is, in spirit and inward essence, related to the Greek, and whether it deserves to be considered as an improvement upon it.

'Of their first attempts, it is only necessary to observe, that the endeavour to imitate the ancients displayed itself at a very early period in France; and that they conceived that the surest method of succeeding in this endeavour, was to observe the strictest outward regularity of form, of which they derived their ideas more from Aristotle, and especially from Seneca, than from an intimate acquaintance with the Greek models themselves. In the first tragedies which were represented, the Cleopatra and Dido of Jodelle, a prologue and chorus were introduced; Jean de la Peruse translated the Medea of Seneca; Garnier's pieces are all taken from the Greek tragedies, or from Seneca; but, in the execution, they bear a much closer examination to the latter. The writers of that day employed themselves also diligently on the Sophonisba of Trissino, from a regard for its classic appearance. Whoever is acquainted with the mode of proceeding of real genius, which is impelled by the almost unconscious and immediate contemplation of great and important truths, will be extremely suspicious of all activity in art, which originates in an abstract theory. But Corneille did not, like an antiquary, execute his dramas as so many learned school exercises, on the model of the ancients. Seneca, it is true, led him astray; but he knew and loved the Spanish theatre; and it had a great influence on his mind. The first of his pieces with which it is generally allowed that the classical epoch of French tragedy begins, and which is certainly one of his best, the *Cid*, is well known to have been borrowed from the Spanish. It violates, considerably, the unity of place, if not also that of time, and it is animated throughout by the spirit of chivalrous love and honour. But the opinion of his contemporaries, that a tragedy must be framed accurately according to

the rules of Aristotle, was so universally prevalent, that it bore down all opposition. Corneille, almost at the close of his dramatic career, began to entertain scruples of conscience; and endeavoured, in a separate treatise, to prove, that his pieces, in the composition of which he had never even thought of Aristotle, were, however, all accurately written according to his rules.

'It is quite otherwise with Racine: of all the French poets he was, without doubt, the best acquainted with the ancients, and he did not merely study them as a scholar; he felt them as a poet. He found, however, the practice of the theatre already firmly established, and he did not undertake to deviate from it for the sake of approaching these models. He only therefore appropriated the separate beauties of the Greek poets; but, whether from respect for the taste of his age, or from inclination, he remained faithful to the prevailing gallantry, so foreign to the Greek tragedy, and for the most part made it the foundation of the intrigues of his pieces.

'Such was nearly the state of the French theatre till Voltaire made his appearance. He possessed but a moderate knowledge of the Greeks, of whom, however, he now and then spoke with enthusiasm, that on other occasions he might rank them below the more modern masters of his own nation, including himself; but yet he always considered himself bound to preach up the grand severity and simplicity of the Greeks as essential to tragedy. He censured the deviations of his predecessors as errors, and insisted on purifying and at the same time enlarging the stage, as, in his opinion, from the constraint of court manners, it had been almost straitened to the dimensions of an antichamber. He at first spoke of the bursts of genius in Shakespear, and borrowed many things from this poet, at that time altogether unknown to his countrymen; he insisted too on greater depth in the delineation of passion, on a more powerful theatrical effect; he demanded a scene ornamented in a more majestic manner; and lastly, he not unfrequently endeavoured to give to his pieces a political or philosophical interest altogether foreign to poetry. His labours have unquestionably been of utility to the French stage, although it is now the fashion to attack this idol of the last age, on every point, with the most unrelenting hostility' p. 323.

M. Schlegel very ably exposes the incongruities which have arisen from engrafting modern style and sentiments on mythological and classical subjects in the French writers.

'In Phædra,' he says, 'this princess is to be declared regent for her son till he comes of age, after the supposed death of Theseus. How could this be compatible with the relations of the Grecian

women of that day?—It brings us down to the times of a Cleopatra.—When the way of thinking of two nations is so totally opposite, why will they torment themselves with attempts to fashion a subject, formed on the manners of the one to suit the manners of the other?—How unlike the Achilles in Racine's Iphigenia to the Achilles of Homer! The gallantry ascribed to him is not merely a sin against Homer, but it renders the whole story improbable. Are human sacrifices conceivable among a people, whose chiefs and heroes are so susceptible of the most tender feelings?'

'Corneille was in the best way in the world when he brought his Cid on the stage; a story of the middle ages, which belonged to a kindred people; a story characterized by chivalrous love and honour, and in which the principal characters are not even of princely rank. Had this example been followed, a number of prejudices respecting tragical ceremony would of themselves have disappeared; tragedy, from its greater truth, from deriving its motives from a way of thinking still current and intelligible, would have been less foreign to the heart; the quality of the objects would of themselves have turned them from the stiff observation of the rules of the ancients, which they did not understand; in one word, the French tragedy would have become national and truly romantic. But I know not what unfortunate star had the ascendant. Notwithstanding the extraordinary success of his Cid, Corneille did not go one step farther; and the attempt which he made had no imitators. In the time of Louis XIV. it was considered as beyond dispute, that the French, and in general the modern European history was not adapted for tragedy. They had recourse therefore to the ancient universal history. Besides the Greeks and Romans, they frequently hunted about among the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians, for events, which, however obscure they might often be, they could dress out for the tragic stage. Racine made, according to his own confession, a hazardous attempt with the Turks: It was successful; and since that time, the necessary tragical dignity has been allowed to this barbarous people. But it was merely the modern, and more particularly the French names, which could not be tolerated as untragical and unpoetical; for the heroes of antiquity are, with them, Frenchmen in every thing but the name; and antiquity was merely used as a thin veil under which the modern French character could be distinctly recognized. Racine's Alexander is certainly not the Alexander of history: but if, under this name, we imagine to ourselves the great Condé, the whole will appear tolerably natural.—And who does not suppose Louis XIV. and the Dutchess de la Valiere represented under Titus and Berenice? Voltaire expresses himself somewhat strongly,

when he says, that, in the tragedies which succeeded those of Racine, we imagine we are reading the romances of Mademoiselle Scuderi, which paint citizens of Paris under the names of heroes of antiquity. He alluded here more particularly to Crebillon. However much Corneille and Racine were tainted with the way of thinking of their own nation, they were still at times penetrated with the spirit of true *objective* exhibition. Corneille gives us a masterly picture of the Spaniards in the Cid; and this is conceivable—for he drew his materials from them. With the exception of the original sin of gallantry, he succeeded also pretty well with the Romans: Of one part of their character at least, he had a tolerable conception, their predominating patriotism, and unyielding pride of liberty, and the magnanimity of their political sentiments. All this, it is true, is nearly the same as we find it in Lucan, varnished over with a certain inflation and self-conscious pomp. The simple republican austerity, the humility of religion, he could not attain. Racine (in Britannicus) has admirably painted the corrupt manners of the Romans under the Emperors, and the timid and dastardly manner in which the tyranny of Nero first began to display itself. He had Tacitus indeed for a model, as he himself gratefully acknowledges; but still it is a great merit to translate history in such an able manner into poetry. He has also shown a just conception of the general spirit of Hebrew history. He was less successful with the Turks: Bajazet makes love wholly in the European manner: The blood-thirsty policy of Eastern despotism is very well pourtrayed in the Vizier; but the whole resembles Turkey turned upside down, where the women, instead of being slaves, have contrived to get possession of the government; and the result is so very revolting, that we might be inclined to infer, from it, the Turks are really not so much to blame in keeping their women under lock and key. Neither has Voltaire, in my opinion, succeeded much better in his Mahomet and Zaire: the glowing colours of an Oriental fancy are no where to be found. Voltaire has, however, this great merit, that he insisted on treating subjects with more historical truth; and further, that he again elevated to the dignity of the tragical stage the chivalrous and Christian characters of modern Europe, which, since the time of the Cid, had been altogether excluded from it. His Lusignan and Nerestan are among his most true, affecting, and noble creations; his Tancred, although the invention as a whole is defective in strength, will always gain upon every heart, like his namesake in Tasso.' p. 369.

Our author prefers Racine to Corneille, and even seems to think Voltaire more natural: but he has exhausted all that can be said of French tragedy in his account of Corneille; and all that he adds

upon Racine and Voltaire, is only a modification of the same general principles. He has been able to give no general character of either, as distinct from the original founder of the French dramatic school; Corneille had more pomp, Racine more tenderness; Voltaire aimed at a stronger effect: But the essential qualities are the same in all of them; the style is always French, as much as the language in which they write.

'It has been often remarked, that, in French tragedy, the poet is always too easily seen through the discourses of the different personages; that he communicates to them his own presence of mind; his cool reflection on their situation; and his desire to shine upon all occasions. When we accurately examine the most of their tragical speeches, we shall find that they are seldom such as would be delivered by persons, speaking or acting by themselves without any restraint; we shall generally discover in them something which betrays a reference, more or less perceptible, to the spectator. Rhetoric, and rhetoric in a court dress, prevails but too much in many French tragedies, especially in those of Corneille, instead of the suggestions of a noble, but simple and artless nature: Racine and Voltaire have approximated much nearer to the true conception of a mind carried away by its sufferings. Whenever the tragic hero is able to express his pain in antitheses and ingenious allusions, we may safely dispense with our pity. This sort of conventional dignity is, as it were, a coat of mail, to prevent the blow from reaching the inward parts. On account of their retaining this festal pomp, in situations where the most complete self-forgetfulness would be natural, Schiller has wittily enough compared the heroes in French tragedy to the kings in old copperplates, who are seen lying in bed with their mantle, crown, and sceptre.' p. 373, &c.

Racine is deservedly the favourite of the French nation; for, besides the perfection of his style, and a complete mastery over his art, according to the rules prescribed by the national taste, there is a certain tenderness of sentiment, a movement of the heart, under all the artificial pomp by which it is disguised, which cannot fail to interest the reader. His *Athalie* is perhaps the most perfect of all his pieces. Some of the lyrical descriptions are equally delightful, from the beauty of the rhythm and the imagery. We might mention the chorus in which the infant Joaz is compared to a young lily on the side of a stream. Poetry is the union of imagery with sentiment; and yet nothing can be more rare than this union in French tragedy. Another passage in Racine, which might be quoted as an exception to their general style, is the speech of Phædra describing her descent into the other world, which is, however, a good deal made up from

Seneca; and indeed it is the fault of this author, that he leans too constantly for support on others, and is rather the accomplished imitator than the original inventor. There is but one thing wanting to his plays—that they should have been his own. He can no more be considered as the author of the Iphigenia, for instance, than La Fontaine can be considered as the inventor of Æsop's fables. Voltaire is more original in the choice of his subjects. But the means by which he seeks to give an interest to them, are of the most harsh and violent kind; and, even in the variety of his materials, he shows the monotony of his invention. Four of his principal tragedies turn entirely on the question of religious apostasy, or on the conflict between the attachment of supposed orphans to their newly discovered parents, and their obligations to their old benefactors. As a relief, however, the scene of these four tragedies is laid in the four opposite quarters of the globe.

M. Schlegel speaks highly of Racine's comedy, '*Les Plaideurs*'; and thinks that if he had cultivated his talents for comedy, he would have proved a formidable rival of Moliere. He might very probably have succeeded in imitating the long speeches which Moliere too often imitated from Racine; but nothing can (we think) be more unlike, than the real genius of the two writers. In fact, Moliere is almost as much an English as a French author,—quite a *barbare*, in all in which he particularly excels. He was unquestionably one of the greatest comic geniuses that ever lived; a man of infinite wit, gaiety, and invention,—full of life, laughter, and observation. But it cannot be denied that his plays are in general mere farces, without nature, refinement of character, or common probability. Several of them could not be carried on for a moment without a perfect collusion between the parties to wink at impossibilities, and act in defiance of all common sense. For instance, take the *Medecin malgre lui*, in which a common wood-cutter takes upon himself, and is made to support, through a whole play, the character of a learned physician, without exciting the least suspicion; and yet, notwithstanding the absurdity of the plot, it is one of the most laughable, and truly comic productions, that can well be imagined. The rest of his lighter pieces, the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *Monsieur Pourceaugnac*, &c. are of the same description,—gratuitous fictions, and fanciful caricatures of nature. He indulges in the utmost license of burlesque exaggeration; and gives a loose to the intoxication of his animal spirits. With respect to his two most laboured comedies, the Tartuffe and Misanthrope, we confess that we find them rather hard to get through. They have the improbability and extravagance of the rest, united with the endless common-place prosing of French declama-

tion. What can exceed the absurdity of the Misanthrope, who leaves his mistress, after every proof of her attachment and constancy, for no other reason than that she will not submit to the *technical formality* of going to live with him in a desert? The characters which Celimene gives of her friends, near the opening of the play, are admirable satires, (as good as Pope's characters of women), but not comedy. The same remarks apply in a greater degree to the Tartuffe. The long speeches and reasonings in this play may be very good logic, or rhetoric, or philosophy, or any thing but comedy. If each of the parties had retained a special pleader to speak his sentiments, they could not have appeared more tiresome or intricate. The improbability of the character of Orgon is wonderful. The *Ecole des Femmes*, from which Wycherley has borrowed the Country Wife, with the true spirit of original genius, is, in our judgment, the masterpiece of Moliere. The set speeches in the original play would not be borne on the English stage, nor indeed on the French, but that they are carried off by the verse. The *Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes*, the dialogue of which is prose, is written in a very different style.

Our author attributes the ambitious loquacity of the French drama to their characteristic vanity, and the general desire of this nation to shine on all occasions. But this principle seems itself to require a prior cause, namely, a facility of shining on all occasions, and a disposition to admire every thing. It has been remarked, as a general rule, that the theatrical amusements of a people, which are intended as a relaxation from their ordinary pursuits and habits, are by no means a test of the national character; and it is a confirmation of this opinion, that the French, who are naturally a lively and impatient people, should be able to sit and hear with such delight their own dramatic pieces, which abound, for the most part, in sententious maxims and solemn declamation, and would appear quite insupportable to an English audience, though the latter are considered as a dull, phlegmatic people, much more likely to be tolerant of formal descriptions and grave reflections.

Extremes meet. This is the only way of accounting for that enigma, the French character. It has often been remarked, indeed, that this ingenious nation exhibits more striking contradictions in its general deportment than any other that ever existed. They are the gayest of the gay, and the gravest of the grave. Their very faces pass at once from an expression of the most lively animation, when they are in conversation or action, to a melancholy blank. They are one moment the slaves of the most contemptible prejudices, and the next launch out into all the extravagance of the most

dangerous speculations. In matters of taste they are as inexorable as they are lax in questions of morality: they judge of the one by rules, of the other by their inclinations. It seems at times as if nothing could shock them, and yet they are offended at the merest trifles. The smallest things make the greatest impression on them. From the facility with which they can accommodate themselves to circumstances, they have no fixed principles or real character. They are always that which gives them least pain, or costs them least trouble. They can easily disentangle their thoughts from whatever gives them the slightest uneasiness, and direct their sensibility to flow in any channels they think proper. Their whole existence is more theatrical than real—their sentiments put on or off like the dress of an actor. Words are with them equivalent to things. They say what is agreeable, and believe what they say. Virtue and vice, good and evil, liberty or slavery, are matters almost of indifference. They are the only people who were ever vain of being cuckolded, or being conquered. Their natural self-complacency stands them instead of all other advantages!

The same almost inexplicable contradictions appear in their writings as in their characters. They excel in all that depends on lightness and grace of style, on familiar gaiety, on delicate irony, on quickness of observation, on nicety of tact—in all those things which are done best with the least effort. Their sallies, their points, their traits, turns of expression, their tales, their letters, are unrivalled. Witness the writings of Voltaire, Fontaine, Le Sage. Whence then the long speeches, the pompous verbosity, the systematic arrangement of their dramatic productions? It would seem as if they took refuge in this excessive formality, as a defence against their natural lightness and frivolity: and that they admitted of no mixed style in poetry, because the least interruption of their assumed gravity would destroy the whole effect. The impression has no natural hold of their minds. It is only by repeated efforts that they work themselves up to the tragic tone, and their feelings let go their hold with the first opportunity. They conform, in the most rigid manner, to established rules, because they have no steadiness to go alone, nor confidence to trust to the strength of their immediate impulses. The French have no style of their own in serious art, because they have no real force of character. Their tragedies are imitations of the Greek dramas, and their historical pictures a still more servile and misapplied imitation of the Greek statues. For the same reason, the expression which their artists give to their faces is affected and mechanical; and the description which their poets give of the passions, the most laboured, overt and explicit possible.

Nothing is left to be *understood*. Nothing obscure, distant, imperfect—nothing that is not distinctly made out—nothing that does not stand, as it were, in the foreground, is admitted in their works of art.

The dark and doubtful views of things, the irregular flights of fancy, the silent workings of the heart—all these require some effort to enter into them: They are therefore excluded from French poetry, the language of which must, above all things, be clear and defined, and not only intelligible, but intelligible by its previous application. It is therefore essentially conventional and commonplace. It rejects every thing that is not cast in a given mould—that is not stamped by custom—that is not sanctioned by authority;—every thing that is not French. The French, indeed, can conceive of nothing that is not French. There is something that prevents them from entering into any views which do not perfectly fall in with their habitual prejudices. In a word, they are not a people of imagination. They receive their impressions without trouble or effort, and retain no more of them than they can help. They are the creatures either of sensation or abstraction. The images of things, when the objects are no longer present, throw off all their complexity and distinctions, and are lost in the general class, or name; so that the words *charming*, *delicious*, *superb*, &c. convey just the same meaning, and excite just the same emotion in the mind of a Frenchman, as the most vivid description of real objects and feelings could do. Hence their poetry is the poetry of abstraction. Yet poetry is properly the embodying general ideas in individual forms and circumstances. But the French style excludes all individuality. The true poet identifies the reader with the characters he represents; the French poet only identifies him with himself. There is scarcely a single page of their tragedy which fairly throws nature open to you. It is tragedy in masquerade. We never get beyond conjecture and reasoning—beyond the general impression of the situation of the persons—beyond general reflections on their passions—beyond general descriptions of objects. We never get at that something more, which is what we are in search of, namely, what we ourselves should feel in the same situations. The true poet transports you to the scene—you see and hear what is passing—you catch, from the lips of the persons concerned, what lies nearest to their hearts;—the French poet takes you into his closet, and reads you a lecture upon it. The *chef-d'œuvres* of their stage, then, are, after all, only ingenious paraphrases of nature. The dialogue is a tissue of commonplaces, of laboured declamations on human life, of learned casuistry on the passions, on virtue and vice, which any one else might make just as well as the person speaking; and yet, what the persons themselves would say, is all

we want to know, and all for which the poet puts them into those situations. It is what constitutes the difference between the dramatic and the didactic.

All this is differently managed in Shakespear: And accordingly, the French translations of that author uniformly leave out all the poetry, or what we consider as such. They generalize the passion, the character, the thoughts, the images, every thing;—they reduce it to a common topic. It is then perfect—for it is French. It would be in vain to look, in these unmeaning paraphrases, where all is made unobjectionable, and smooth as the palm of one's hand, for the 'Not a jot, not a jot,' in Othello,—for the 'Light thickens,' of Macbeth,—or the picture which the exclamation of the witches gives us of him, 'Why stands Macbeth thus amazedly?' When Othello kills himself, after that noble characteristic speech at the end, in which he makes us feel all that passes in his soul, and runs over the objects and events of his whole life, the blow strikes not only at him but at us: When Orosman in Zaire, after a speech which Voltaire has copied from the English poet, does the same thing, he falls—like a commonplace personified. We do not here insist on the preference to be given to one or other of these two styles; we only say they are quite different. The French critics contend, we think without reason, that their own is exclusively good, and all others barbarous.

Not so our author. If Shakespear never found a thorough partisan before, he has found one now. We have not room for half of his praise. He defends him at all points. His puns, his conceits, his anachronisms, his broad allusions, all go, not indeed for nothing, but for so many beauties. They are not something to be excused by the age, or atoned for by other qualities; but they are worthy of all acceptation in themselves. This we do not think it necessary to say. It is no part of our poetical creed, that genius can do no wrong. As the French show their allegiance to their kings by crying *Quand meme!*—so we think to show our respect for Shakespear by loving him in spite of his faults. Take the whole of these faults, throw them into one scale, heap them up double, and then double that, and we will throw into the opposite scale single excellences, single characters, or even single passages, that shall outweigh them all! All his faults have not prevented him from showing as much knowledge of human nature, in all possible shapes, as is to be found in all other poets put together; and that, we conceive, is quite enough for one writer. Compared with this magical power, his faults are of just as much consequence as his bad spelling, and to be accounted for in the same way. In speaking of

Shakespear, we do not mean to make any general comparison between the French and English stage. There is no other acknowledged English school of tragedy,—or it is merely a bad imitation of the French. We give them up Addison; but we must keep Shakespear to ourselves. He had even the advantage of the Greek tragedians in this respect, that, with all their genius, they seem to have described only Greek manners and sentiments: whereas he describes all the people that ever lived. That which distinguishes his dramatic productions from all others, is this wonderful variety and perfect individuality. Each of his characters is as much itself, and as absolutely independent of the rest, as if they were living persons, not fictions of the mind. The poet appears, for the time, to identify himself with the character he wishes to represent, and to pass from one to the other, like the same soul successively animating different bodies. By an art like that of the ventriloquist, he throws his imagination out of himself, and makes every word appear to proceed from the mouth of the person in whose name it is spoken. His plays alone are expressions of the passions, not descriptions of them. His characters are real beings of flesh and blood: they speak like men, not like authors. One might suppose that he had stood by at the time, and overheard all that passed. As, in our dreams, we hold conversations with ourselves, make remarks or communicate intelligence, and have no idea of the answer which we shall receive, and which we ourselves are to make, till we hear it; so, the dialogues in Shakespear are carried on without any consciousness of what is to follow, without any appearance of preparation or premeditation. The gusts of passion come and go like sounds of music borne on the wind. Nothing is made out by inference and analogy, by climax and antithesis; all comes immediately from nature. Each object and circumstance seems to exist in his mind, as it existed in nature; each several train of thought and feeling goes on of itself without confusion or effort: In the world of his imagination, every thing has a life, a place, and being of its own![1]

'The distinguishing property,' says our author, 'of the dramatic poet, is the capability of transporting himself so completely into every situation, even the most unusual, that he is enabled, as plenipotentiary of the whole human race, without particular instructions

[1] The universality of Shakespear's genius has, perhaps, been a disadvantage to his single works: the variety of his resources has prevented him from giving that intense concentration of interest to some of them which they might have had. He is in earnest only in Lear and Timon. He combined the powers of Æschylus and Aristophanes, of Dante and Rabelais, in his own mind. If he had been only half what he was, he might have seemed greater.

for each separate case, to act and speak in the name of every individual. It is the power of endowing the creatures of his imagination with such self-existent energy, that they afterwards act in each conjuncture according to general laws of nature: the poet institutes, as it were, experiments, which are received with as much authority as if they had been made on real objects. Never, perhaps, was there so comprehensive a talent for the delineation of character as Shakespear's. It not only grasps the diversities of rank, sex, and age, down to the dawnings of infancy; not only do the king and the beggar, the hero and the pickpocket, the sage and the idiot, speak and act with equal truth; not only does he transport himself to distant ages and foreign nations, and portray in the most accurate manner, with only a few apparent violations of costume, the spirit of the ancient Romans, of the French in their wars with the English, of the English themselves during a great part of their history, of the Southern Europeans (in the serious part of many comedies), the cultivated society of that time, and the former rude and barbarous state of the North; his human characters have not only such depth and precision that they cannot be arranged under classes, and are inexhaustible, even in conception:—no—This Prometheus not merely forms men, he opens the gates of the magical world of spirits; calls up the midnight ghost; exhibits before us his witches amidst their unhallowed mysteries; peoples the air with sportive fairies and sylphs:—and, these beings existing only in imagination, possess such truth and consistency, that, even when deformed monsters like Caliban, he extorts the conviction, that if there should be such beings, they would so conduct themselves. In a word, as he carries with him the most fruitful and daring fancy into the kingdom of nature,—on the other hand, he carries nature into the regions of fancy, lying beyond the confines of reality. We are lost in astonishment at seeing the extraordinary, the wonderful, and the unheard of, in such intimate nearness.

'If Shakespear deserves our admiration for his characters, he is equally deserving it for his exhibition of passion, taking this word in its widest signification, as including every mental condition, every tone from indifference or familiar mirth to the wildest rage and despair. He gives us the history of minds; he lays open to us, in a single word, a whole series of preceding conditions. His passions do not at first stand displayed to us in all their height, as is the case with so many tragic poets, who, in the language of Lessing, are thorough masters of the legal style of love. He paints in a most inimitable manner, the gradual progress from the first origin. "He gives," as Lessing says, "a living picture of all the most minute

and secret artifices by which a feeling steals into our souls; of all the imperceptible advantages which it there gains; of all the stratagems by which every other passion is made subservient to it, till it becomes the sole tyrant of our desires and our aversions." Of all poets, perhaps, he alone has portrayed the mental diseases, melancholy, delirium, lunacy, with such inexpressible, and, in every respect, definite truth, that the physician may enrich his observations from them in the same manner as from real cases.

'And yet Johnson has objected to Shakespear, that his pathos is no talways natural and free from affectation. There are, it is true, passages, though, comparatively speaking, very few, where his poetry exceeds the bounds of true dialogue, where a too soaring imagination, a too luxuriant wit, rendered the complete dramatic forgetfulness of himself impossible. With this exception, the censure originates only in a fanciless way of thinking, to which every thing appears unnatural that does not suit its own tame insipidity. Hence, an idea has been formed of simple and natural pathos, which consists in exclamations destitute of imagery, and nowise elevated above every-day life. But energetical passions electrify the whole of the mental powers, and will, consequently, in highly favoured natures, express themselves in an ingenious and figurative manner. It has been often remarked, that indignation gives wit; and, as despair occasionally breaks out into laughter, it may sometimes also give vent to itself in antithetical comparisons.

'Besides, the rights of the poetical form have not been duly weighed. Shakespear, who was always sure of his object, to move in a sufficiently powerful manner when he wished to do so, has occasionally, by indulging in a freer play, purposely moderated the impressions when too painful, and immediately introduced a musical alleviation of our sympathy. He had not those rude ideas of his art which many moderns seem to have, as if the poet, like the clown in the proverb, must strike twice on the same place. An ancient rhetorician delivered a caution against dwelling too long on the excitation of pity; for nothing, he said, dries so soon as tears; and Shakespear acted conformably to this ingenious maxim, without knowing it.

'The objection, that Shakespear wounds our feelings by the open display of the most disgusting moral odiousness, harrows up the mind unmercifully, and tortures even our minds by the exhibition of the most insupportable and hateful spectacles, is one of much greater importance. He has never, in fact, varnished over wild and bloodthirsty passions with a pleasing exterior,—never clothed crime and want of principle with a false show of greatness of soul; and in that

respect he is every way deserving of praise. Twice he has portrayed downright villains; and the masterly way in which he has contrived to elude impressions of too painful a nature, may be seen in Iago and Richard the Third. The constant reference to a petty and puny race must cripple the boldness of the poet. Fortunately for his art, Shakespear lived in an age extremely susceptible of noble and tender impressions, but which had still enough of the firmness inherited from a vigorous olden time, not to shrink back with dismay from every strong and violent picture. We have lived to see tragedies of which the catastrophe consists in the swoon of an enamoured princess. If Shakespear falls occasionally into the opposite extreme, it is a noble error, originating in the fulness of a gigantic strength: And yet this tragical Titan, who storms the heavens, and threatens to tear the world from off its hinges; who, more fruitful than Æschylus, makes our hair stand on end, and congeals our blood with horror, possessed, at the same time, the insinuating loveliness of the sweetest poetry. He plays with love like a child; and his songs are breathed out like melting sighs. He unites in his genius the utmost elevation and the utmost depth; and the most foreign, and even apparently irreconcileable properties, subsist in him peaceably together. The world of spirits and nature have laid all their treasures at his feet. In strength a demi-god, in profundity of view a prophet, in all-seeing wisdom a protecting spirit of a higher order, he lowers himself to mortals, as if unconscious of his superiority; and is as open and unassuming as a child.

'Shakespear's comic talent is equally wonderful with that which he has shown in the pathetic and tragic: it stands on an equal elevation, and possesses equal extent and profundity. All that I before wished was, not to admit that the former preponderated. He is highly inventive in comic situations and motives. It will be hardly possible to show whence he has taken any of them; whereas in the serious part of his drama, he has generally laid hold of something already known. His comic characters are equally true, various and profound, with his serious. So little is he disposed to caricature, that we may rather say many of his traits are almost too nice and delicate for the stage, that they can only be properly seized by a great actor, and fully understood by a very acute audience. Not only has he delineated many kinds of folly; he has also contrived to exhibit mere stupidity in a most diverting and entertaining manner.' II. 145.

The observations on Shakespear's language and versification which follow, are excellent. We cannot, however, agree with the author in thinking his rhyme superior to Spenser's: His excellence is

confined to his blank verse; and in that he is unrivalled by any dramatic writer. Milton's alone is equally fine in its way. The objection to Shakespear's mixed metaphors is not here fairly got over. They give us no pain from long custom. They have, in fact, become idioms in the language. We take the meaning and effect of a well known passage entire, and no more stop to scan and spell out the particular words and phrases than the syllables of which they are composed. If our critic's general observations on Shakespear are excellent, he has shown still greater acuteness and knowledge of his author in those which he makes on the particular plays. They ought, in future, to be annexed to every edition of Shakespear, to correct the errors of preceding critics. In his analysis of the historical plays,—of those founded on the Roman history,—of the romantic comedies, and the fanciful productions of Shakespear, such as, the Midsummer Night's Dream, the Tempest, &c., he has shown the most thorough insight into the spirit of the poet. His contrast between Ariel and Caliban; the one made up of all that is gross and earthly, the other of all that is airy and refined, 'ethereal mould, sky-tinctured,'—is equally happy and profound. He does not, however, confound Caliban with the coarseness of common low life. He says of him with perfect truth—'Caliban is malicious, cowardly, false and base in his inclinations; and yet he is essentially different from the vulgar knaves of a civilized world, as they are occasionally portrayed by Shakespear. He is rude, but not vulgar. He never falls into the prosaical and low familiarity of his drunken associates, for he is a poetical being in his way; he always, too, speaks in verse. But he has picked up every thing dissonant and thorny in language, of which he has composed his vocabulary.'

In his account of Cymbeline and other plays, he has done justice to the sweetness of Shakespear's female characters, and refuted the idle assertion made by a critic, who was also a poet and a man of genius, that

—'stronger Shakespear felt for man alone.'

Who, indeed, in recalling the names of Imogen, of Miranda, of Juliet, of Desdemona, of Ophelia and Perdita, does not feel that Shakespear has expressed the very perfection of the feminine character, existing only for others, and leaning for support on the strength of its affections? The only objection to his female characters is, that he has not made them masculine. They are indeed the very reverse of ordinary tragedy-queens. In speaking of Romeo and Juliet, he says, 'It was reserved for Shakespear to unite purity of heart, and the glow of imagination, sweetness and

dignity of manners, and passionate violence, in one ideal picture.' The character of Juliet was not to be mistaken by our author. It is one of perfect unconsciousness. It has nothing forward, nothing coy, nothing affected, nothing coquettish about it:—It is a pure effusion of nature.

'Whatever,' says our critic, 'is most intoxicating in the odour of a southern spring, languishing in the song of the nightingale, or voluptuous on the first opening of the rose, is breathed in this poem. But, even more rapidly than the earliest blossoms of youth and beauty decay, it hurries on from the first timid declaration of love and modest return, to the most unlimited passion—to an irrevocable union; then, amidst alternating storms of rapture and despair, to the death of the two lovers, who still appear enviable as their love survives them, and as, by their death, they have obtained a triumph over every separating power. The sweetest and the bitterest; love and hatred; festivity and dark forebodings; tender embraces and sepulchres; the fulness of life and self-annihilation—are all here brought close to each other: And all these contrasts are so blended in the harmonious and wonderful work into a unity of impression, that the echo which the whole leaves behind in the mind resembles a single but endless sigh.'

In treating of the four principal tragedies, Othello, Macbeth, Hamlet and Lear, he goes deeper into the poetry and philosophy of those plays than any of the commentators. But we dare not now encroach on the patience of our readers with any farther citations.

The remarks on the doubtful pieces of Shakespear are most liable to objection. We cannot agree, for instance, that Titus Andronicus is in the spirit of Lear, because in his dotage he mistakes a fly which he has killed for his black enemy the Moor. Thomas Lord Cromwell, and Sir John Oldcastle, which he praises highly, are very indifferent. Pericles, prince of Tyre, is not much to our taste. There is one fine scene in it, where Marina rouses the prince from his lethargy, by the proofs of her being his daughter. Yet this is not like Shakespear. The Yorkshire Tragedy is very good; but decidedly in the manner of Heywood. The account given by Schlegel, of the contemporaries and immediate successors of Shakespear is good, though it might have been better. That of Ben Jonson is particularly happy. He says, that he described not characters, but 'humours,' that is, particular modes of expression, dress and behaviour in fashion at the time, which have since become obsolete, and the imitation of them dry and unintelligible. The finest thing in Ben Jonson (not that it is by any means the only one), is the scene between Surly and Sir Epicure Mammon, where the

latter proves his possession of the philosopher's stone, by a pompous display of the riches, luxuries and pleasures he is to derive from it; and, by a happy perversion of logic, satisfies himself, though not his hearer, of the existence of the cause, by a strong imagination of the effects which are to follow from it. He is also very successful in his character of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. They describe the passions at their height, not in their progress—the extremes, not the gradations of feeling. Their plays, however, have great power and great beauty. The Faithful Shepherdess is the origin of Milton's Comus. 'Rule a Wife and Have a Wife' is one of the very best comedies that ever was written; and holds, to this day, undisputed possession of the stage. Yet, as our critic observes, there is in the general tone of their writings a certain crudeness and precocity, a heat, a violence of fermentation, a disposition to carry every thing to excess, which is not pleasant. Their plays are very much what young noblemen of genius might be supposed to write in the heyday of youthful blood, the sunshine of fortune, and all the petulance of self-opinion. They have completely anticipated the German paradoxes. Schlegel has no mercy on the writers of the age of Charles II. He compares Dryden himself to 'a man walking upon stilts in a morass.' He justly prefers Otway to Rowe; but we think he is wrong in supposing, that if Otway had lived longer he would have done better. His plays are only the ebullitions of a fine, enthusiastic, sanguine temperament: and his genius would no more have improved with age, than the beauty of his person. Of our comic writers, Congreve, Wycherley, Vanburgh, &c., M. Schlegel speaks very contemptuously and superficially. It is plain that he knows nothing about them, or he would not prefer Farquhar to all the rest. If, after our earlier dramatists, we have any class of writers who are excellent, it is our comic writers.

We cannot go into our author's account of the Spanish drama. The principal names in it are Cervantes, Calderon, and Lope de Vega. Neither can we agree in the praises which he lavishes on the dramatic productions of these authors. They are too flowery, lyrical, and descriptive. They are pastorals, not tragedies. They have warmth; but they want vigour.

Our author may be supposed to be at home in German literature; but his doctrines appear to us to be more questionable there, than upon any other subject. What the German dramatists really excel in, is the production of effect: but this is the very thing which their fastidious countryman most despises and abhors. They really excel all others in mere effect; and there is no nation that can excel all others in more than one thing. Werter is, in our opinion, the best

of all Goethe's works; but because it is the most popular, our author takes an opportunity to express his contempt for it. Count Egmont, which is here spoken highly of, seems to us a most insipid and preposterous composition. The effect of the pathos which is said to lie concealed in it, is utterly lost upon us. Nathan the Wise, by Lessing, is also a great favourite of Schlegel; because it is unintelligible except to the wise. As the French plays are composed of a tissue of commonplaces, the German plays of this stamp are a tissue of paradoxes, which have no foundation in nature or common opinion,—the pure offspring of the author's fantastic brain. For the same reason, Schiller's Wallenstein is here preferred to his Robbers. But we cannot so readily give up our old attachment to the Robbers. The first reading of that play is an event in every one's life, which is not to be forgotten.

Madame de Staël has very happily ridiculed this pedantic's taste in criticism.

'By a singular vicissitude in taste, it has happened, that the Germans at first attacked our dramatic writers, as converting all their heroes into Frenchmen. They have, with reason, insisted on historic truth as necessary to contrast the colours, and give life to the poetry. But then, all at once, they have been weary of their own success in this way, and have produced abstract representations, in which the relations of mankind were expressed in a general manner, and in which time, place and circumstance, passed for nothing. In a drama of this kind by Goethe, the author calls the different characters the Duke, the King, the Father, the Daughter, &c., without any other designation.

'Such a tragedy is only calculated to be acted in the palace of Odin, where the dead still continue their different occupations on earth; where the hunter, himself a shade, eagerly pursues the shade of a stag; and fantastic warriors combat together in the clouds. It should appear, that Goethe at one period conceived an absolute disgust to all interest in dramatic compositions. It was sometimes to be met with in bad works; and he concluded, that it ought to be banished from good ones. Nevertheless, a man of superior mind ought not to disdain what gives universal pleasure; he cannot relinquish his resemblance with his kind, if he wishes to make others feel his own value. Granting that the tyranny of custom often introduces an artificial air into the best French tragedies, it cannot be denied that there is the same want of natural expression in the systematic and theoretical productions of the German muse. If exaggerated declamation is affected, there is a certain kind of intellectual calm which is not less so. It is a kind of arrogated

superiority over the affections of the soul, which may accord very well with philosophy, but is totally out of character in the dramatic art. Goethe's works are composed according to different principles and systems. In the Tasso and Iphigenia, he conceives of tragedy as a lofty relic of the monuments of antiquity. These works have all the beauty of form, the splendour and glossy smoothness of marble;—but they are as cold and as motionless.'

We have, we trust, said enough of this work, to recommend it to the reader: We ought to add, that the translation appears to be very respectable.

COLERIDGE'S LAY SERMON

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'The privilege' (says a certain author) 'of talking, and even publishing nonsense, is necessary in a free state; but the more sparingly we make use of it, the better.' Mr. Coleridge has here availed himself of this privilege,—but not sparingly. On the contrary, he has given full scope to his genius, and laid himself out in absurdity. In this his first Lay-sermon (for two others are to follow at graceful distances), we meet with an abundance of 'fancies and good-nights,' odd ends of verse, and sayings of philosophers; with the ricketty contents of his commonplace book, piled up and balancing one another in helpless confusion; but with not one word to the purpose, or on the subject. An attentive perusal of this Discourse is like watching the sails of a windmill: his thoughts and theories rise and disappear in the same manner. Clouds do not shift their places more rapidly, dreams do not drive one another out more unaccountably, than Mr. Coleridge's reasonings try in vain to 'chase his fancy's rolling speed.' His intended conclusions have always the start of his premises,—and they keep it: while he himself plods anxiously between the two, something like a man travelling a long, tiresome road, between two stage coaches, the one of which is gone out of sight before, and the other never comes up with him; for Mr. Coleridge himself takes care of this; and if he finds himself in danger of being overtaken, and carried to his journey's end in a common vehicle, he immediately steps aside into some friendly covert, with the Metaphysical Muse, to prevent so unwelcome a catastrophe. In his weary quest of truth, he reminds us of the mendicant pilgrims that travellers meet in the Desert, with their faces always turned towards Mecca, but who contrive never to reach the shrine of the Prophet: and he treats his opinions, and his reasons for them, as lawyers do

their clients, and will never suffer them to come together lest they should join issue, and so put an end to his business. It is impossible, in short, we find, to describe this strange rhapsody, without falling a little into the style of it;—and, to do it complete justice, we must use its very words. '*Implicité*, it is without the COPULA—it wants the possibility—of every position, to which there exists any correspondence in reality.'

Our Lay-preacher, in order to qualify himself for the office of a guide to the blind, has not, of course, once thought of looking about for matters of fact, but very wisely draws a metaphysical bandage over his eyes, sits quietly down where he was, takes his nap, and talks in his sleep—but we really cannot say very wisely. He winks and mutters all unintelligible, and all impertinent things. Instead of inquiring into the distresses of the manufacturing or agricultural districts, he ascends to the orbits of the fixed stars, or else enters into the statistics of the garden plot under his window, and, like Falstaff, 'babbles of green fields:' instead of the balance of the three estates, King, Lords, and Commons, he gives us a theory of the balance of the powers of the human mind, the Will, the Reason, and—the Understanding: instead of referring to the tythes or taxes, he quotes the Talmud; and illustrates the whole question of peace and war, by observing, that 'the ideal republic of Plato was, if he judges rightly, to "the history of the town of Man-Soul" what Plato was to John Bunyan:'—a most safe and politic conclusion!

Mr. Coleridge is not one of those whom he calls 'alarmists by trade,' but rather, we imagine, what Spenser calls 'a gentle Husher, Vanity by name.' If he does not excite apprehension, by pointing out danger and difficulties where they do not exist, neither does he inspire confidence, by pointing out the means to prevent them where they do. We never indeed saw a work that could do less good or less harm; for it relates to no one object, that any one person can have in view. It tends to produce a complete *interregnum* of all opinions; an *abeyance* of the understanding; a suspension both of theory and practice; and is indeed a collection of doubts and moot-points—all hindrances and no helps. An uncharitable critic might insinuate, that there was more quackery than folly in all this;—and it is certain, that our learned author talks as magnificently of his *nostrums*, as any advertising impostor of them all—and professes to be in possession of all sorts of morals, religions, and political panaceas, which he keeps to himself, and expects you to pay for the secret. He is always promising great things, in short, and performs nothing. The vagaries, whimsies, and pregnant throes of Joanna Southcote, were sober and rational, compared with Mr. Coleridge's

qualms and crude conceptions, and promised deliverance in this Lay-Sermon. The true secret of all this, we suspect, is, that our author has not made up his own mind on any of the subjects of which he professes to treat, and on which he warns his readers against coming to any conclusion, without his especial assistance; by means of which, they may at last attain to 'that imperative and oracular form of the understanding,' of which he speaks as 'the form of reason itself in all things purely rational and moral.' In this state of voluntary self-delusion, into which he has thrown himself, he mistakes hallucinations for truths, though he still has his misgivings, and dares not communicate them to others, except in distant hints, lest the spell should be broken, and the vision disappear. Plain sense and plain speaking would put an end to those 'thick-coming fancies,' that lull him to repose. It is in this sort of waking dream, this giddy maze of opinions, started, and left, and resumed—this momentary pursuit of truths, as if they were butterflies—that Mr. Coleridge's pleasure, and, we believe, his chief faculty, lies. He has a thousand shadowy thoughts that rise before him, and hold each a glass, in which they point to others yet more dim and distant. He has a thousand self-created fancies that glitter and burst like bubbles. In the world of shadows, in the succession of bubbles, there is no preference but of the most shadowy, no attachment but to the shortest-lived. Mr. Coleridge accordingly has no principle but that of being governed entirely by his own caprice, indolence, or vanity; no opinion that any body else holds, or even he himself, for two moments together. His fancy is stronger than his reason; his apprehension greater than his comprehension. He perceives every thing, but the relations of things to one another. His ideas are as finely shaded as the rainbow of the moon upon the clouds, as evanescent, and as soon dissolved. The subtlety of his tact, the quickness and airiness of his invention, make him perceive every possible shade and view of a subject in its turn; but this readiness of lending his imagination to every thing, prevents him from weighing the force of any one, or retaining the most important in mind. It destroys the balance and *momentum* of his feelings; makes him unable to follow up a principle into its consequences, or maintain a truth in spite of opposition: it takes away all *will* to adhere to what is right, and reject what is wrong; and, with the will, the power to do it, at the expense of any thing difficult in thought, or irksome in feeling. The consequence is, that the general character of Mr. Coleridge's intellect, is a restless and yet listless dissipation, that yields to every impulse, and is stopped by every obstacle; an indifference to the greatest trifles, or the most important truths: or rather, a preference of the vapid to the solid, of

the possible to the actual, of the impossible to both; of theory to practice, of contradiction to reason, and of absurdity to common sense. Perhaps it is well that he is so impracticable as he is; for whenever, by any accident, he comes to practice, he is dangerous in the extreme. Though his opinions are neutralized in the extreme levity of his understanding, we are sometimes tempted to suspect that they may be subjected to a more ignoble bias; for though he does not ply his oars very strenuously in following the tide of corruption, or set up his sails to catch the tainted breeze of popularity, he suffers his boat to drift along with the stream. We do not pretend to understand the philosophical principles of that anomalous production, 'the Friend;' but we remember that the practical measures which he there attempted to defend, were the expedition to Copenhagen, the expedition to Walcheren, and the assassination of Buonaparte, which, at the time Mr. Coleridge was getting that work into circulation, was a common topic of conversation, and a sort of *forlorn hope* in certain circles. A man who exercises an unlimited philosophical scepticism on questions of abstract right or wrong, may be of service to the progress of truth; but a writer who exercises this privilege, with a regular leaning to the side of power, is a very questionable sort of person. There is not much of this kind in the present Essay. It has no leaning any way. All the sentiments advanced in it are 'like the swan's down feather—

> 'That stands upon the swell at full of tide,
> And neither way inclines.'

We have here given a pretty strong opinion on the merits of this performance: and we proceed to make it good by extracts from the work itself; and it is just as well to begin with the beginning.

'If our whole knowledge and information concerning the Bible had been confined to the one fact, of its immediate derivation from God, we should still presume that it contained rules and assistances for all conditions of men, under all circumstances; and therefore for communities no less than for individuals. The contents of every work must correspond to the character and designs of the work-master; and the inference in the present case is too obvious to be overlooked, too plain to be resisted. It requires, indeed, all the might of superstition, to conceal from a man of common understanding, the further truth, that the interment of such a treasure, in a dead language, must needs be contrary to the intentions of the gracious Donor. Apostasy itself dared not question the *premise*: and, that the practical *consequence* did not follow, is conceivable only under a complete *system* of delusion, which, from the cradle to the

death-bed, ceases not to overawe the will by obscure fears, while it preoccupies the senses by vivid imagery and ritual pantomime. But to such a scheme, all forms of sophistry are native. The very excellence of the Giver has been made a reason for withholding the gift; nay, the transcendent value of the gift itself assigned as the motive of its detention. We may be shocked at the presumption, but need not be surprised at the fact, that a jealous priesthood should have ventured to represent the applicability of the Bible to all the wants and occasions of men, as a wax-like pliability to all their fancies and prepossessions. Faithful guardians of Holy Writ!' &c.

And after a great deal to the same effect, he proceeds—

'The humblest and least educated of our countrymen must have wilfully neglected the inestimable privileges secured to all alike, if he has not himself found, if he has not from his own personal experience discovered, the sufficiency of the Scriptures in all knowledge requisite for a right performance of his duty as a man and a Christian. Of the labouring classes, who in all countries form the great majority of the inhabitants, more than this is not demanded, more than this is not perhaps generally desirable.'—'They are not sought for in public counsel, nor need they be found where politic sentences are spoken. It is enough if every one is wise in the working of his own craft: so best will they maintain the state of the world.' p. 7.

Now, if this is all that is necessary or desirable for the people to know, we can see little difference between the doctrine of the Lay Sermon, and 'that complete system of papal imposture, which inters the Scriptures in a dead language, and commands its vassals to take for granted what it forbids them to ascertain.' If a candidate is to start for infallibility, we, for our parts, shall give our casting vote for the successor of St. Peter, rather than for Mr. Coleridge. The Bible, we believe, when rightly understood, contains no set of rules for making the labouring classes mere 'workers in brass or in stone,' —'hewers of wood or drawers of water,' each wise in his own craft. Yet it is by confining their inquiries and their knowledge to such vocations, and excluding them from any share in politics, philosophy, and theology, 'that the state of the world is best upheld.' Such is the exposition of our Lay-Divine. Such is his application of it. Why then does he blame the Catholics for acting on this principle—for deducing the *practical consequence* from the acknowledged *premise*? Great as is our contempt for the delusions of the Romish Church, it would have been still greater, if they had opened the sacred volume to the poor and illiterate; had told them that it contained the most useful knowledge for all conditions and for all circumstances of life, public and private; and had then instantly shut the book in their

faces, saying, it was enough for them to be wise in their own calling and to leave the study and interpretation of the Scriptures to their betters—to Mr. Coleridge and his imaginary audience. The Catholic Church might have an excuse for what it did in the supposed difficulty of understanding the Scriptures, their doubts and ambiguities, and 'wax-like pliability to all occasions and humours.' But Mr. Coleridge has no excuse; for he says, they are plain to all capacities, high and low together. 'The road of salvation,' he says, 'is for us a high road, and the way-farer, though simple, need not err therein.' And he accordingly proceeds to draw up a provisional bill of indictment, and to utter his doubtful denunciations against us as a nation, for the supposed neglect of the inestimable privileges, *secured alike to all*, and for the lights held out to all for 'maintaining the state' of their country in the precepts and examples of Holy Writ; when, all of a sudden, his eye encountering that brilliant auditory which his pen had conjured up, the Preacher finds out, that the only use of the study of the Scriptures for the rest of the people, is to learn that they have no occasion to study them at all—'so best shall they maintain the state of the world.' If Mr. Coleridge has no meaning in what he writes, he had better not write at all: if he has any meaning, he contradicts himself. The truth is, however, as it appears to us, that the whole of this Sermon is written to sanction the principle of Catholic dictation, and to reprobate that diffusion of free inquiry—that difference of private, and ascendancy of public opinion, which has been the necessary consequence, and the great benefit of the Reformation. That Mr. Coleridge himself is as squeamish in guarding *his* Statesman's Manual from profanation as any Popish priest can be in keeping the Scriptures from the knowledge of the Laity, will be seen from the following delicate *morceau*, which occurs, p. 44.

'When I named this Essay a Sermon, I sought to prepare the inquirers after it *for the absence of all the usual softenings suggested by worldly prudence, of all compromise between truth and courtesy*. But not even as a Sermon would I have addressed the present Discourse *to a promiscuous audience*; and for this reason I likewise announced it in the title-page, as exclusively *ad clerum*, *i.e.* (in the old and wide sense of the word) to men of *clerkly* acquirements, of whatever profession. I would that the greater part of our publications could be thus *directed*, each to its appropriate class of readers.[1] But this cannot be! For among other odd burrs and kecksies, the misgrowth of our luxuriant activity, we have now a Reading Public—as strange

[1] Do not publications generally find their way there, without a *direction*? R.

a phrase, methinks, as ever forced a splenetic smile on the staid countenance of Meditation; and yet no fiction! For our readers have, in good truth, multiplied exceedingly, and have waxed proud. It would require the intrepid accuracy of a Colquhoun to venture at the precise number of that vast company only, whose heads and hearts are dieted at the two public *ordinaries* of Literature, the circulating libraries and the periodical press. But what is the result? Does the inward man thrive on this regimen? Alas! if the average health of the consumers may be judged of by the articles of largest consumption; if the secretions may be conjectured from the ingredients of the dishes that are found best suited to their palates; from all that I have seen, either of the banquet or the guests, I shall utter my *Profaccia* with a desponding sigh. From a popular philosophy and a philosophic populace, good sense deliver us!'

If it were possible to be serious after a passage like this, we might ask, what is to hinder a convert of 'the church of superstition' from exclaiming in like manner, 'From a popular theology, and a theological populace, Good Lord deliver us!' Mr. Coleridge does not say—will he say—that as many sects and differences of opinion in religion have not risen up, in consequence of the Reformation, as in philosophy or politics, from 'the misgrowth of our luxuriant activity?' Can any one express a greater disgust, (approaching to *nausea*), at every sect and separation from the Church of England, which he sometimes, by an hyperbole of affectation, affects to call the Catholic Church? There is something, then, worse than 'luxuriant activity,'—the palsy of death; something worse than occasional error,—systematic imposture; something worse than the collision of differing opinions,—the suppression of all freedom of thought and independent love of truth, under the torpid sway of an insolent and selfish domination, which makes use of truth and falsehood equally as tools of its own aggrandisement and the debasement of its vassals, and always must do so, without the exercise of public opinion, and freedom of conscience, as its control and counter-check. For what have we been labouring for the last three hundred years? Would Mr. Coleridge, with impious hand, turn the world 'twice ten degrees askance,' and carry us back to the dark ages? Would he punish the *reading public* for their bad taste in reading periodical publications which he does not like, by suppressing the freedom of the press altogether, or destroying the art of printing? He does not know what he means himself. Perhaps we can tell him. He, or at least those whom he writes to please, and who look 'with jealous leer malign' at modern advantages and modern pretensions, would

give us back all the abuses of former times, without any of their advantages; and impose upon us, by force or fraud, a complete system of superstition without faith, of despotism without loyalty, of error without enthusiasm, and all the evils, without any of the blessings, of ignorance. The senseless jargon which Mr. Coleridge has let fall on this subject, is the more extraordinary, inasmuch as he declares, in an early part of his Sermon, that 'Religion and Reason are their own evidence;'—a position which appears to us 'fraught with *potential infidelity*' quite as much as Unitarianism, or the detestable plan for teaching reading and writing, and a knowledge of the Scriptures, without the creed or the catechism of the Church of England. The passage in which this sweeping clause is introduced *en passant*, is worth quoting, both as it is very nonsensical in itself, and as it is one of the least nonsensical in the present pamphlet.

'In the infancy of the world, signs and wonders were requisite, in order to startle and break down that superstition, idolatrous in itself, and the source of all other idolatry, which tempts the natural man to seek the true cause and origin of public calamities in outward circumstances, persons and incidents: in agents, therefore, that were themselves but surges of the same tide, passive conductors of the one invisible influence, under which the total host of billows, in the whole line of successive impulse, swell and roll shoreward; there finally, each in its turn, to strike, roar, and be dissipated.

'But with each miracle worked there was a truth revealed, which thenceforward was to act as its substitute: And if we think the Bible less applicable to us on account of the miracles, we degrade ourselves into mere slaves of sense and fancy; which are, indeed, the appointed medium between earth and heaven, but for that very cause stand in a desirable relation to spiritual truth then only, when, as a mere and passive medium, they yield a free passage to its light. It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. Reason and Religion are their own evidence. The natural sun is, in this respect, a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night-season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception.' p. 12.

Here is a very pretty Della Cruscan image: and we really think it a pity, that Mr. Coleridge ever quitted that school of poetry to grapple with the simplicity of nature, or to lose himself in the

depths of philosophy. His illustration is pretty, but false. He treats the miracles recorded in the Scriptures, with more than heretical boldness, as mere appeals to 'sense and fancy,' or to 'the natural man,' to counteract the impressions of sense and fancy. But, for the light of Heaven to have been like the light of day in this respect, the Sun ought to have called up other vapours opposite, as mirrors or pageants to reflect its light, dimmed by the intermediate vapours, instead of chasing the last away. We criticize the simile, because we are sure higher authority will object to the doctrine. We might challenge Mr. Coleridge to point out a single writer, Catholic, Protestant or Sectarian, whose principles are not regarded as *potential infidelity* by the rest, that does not consider the miraculous attestation of certain revealed doctrines as proofs of their truth, independently of their internal evidence. They are a distinct and additional authority. Reason and Religion are no more the same in this respect, than ocular demonstration and oral testimony are the same. Neither are they opposed to one another, any more. We believe in credible witnesses. We believe in the word of God, when we have reason to suppose, that we hear his voice in the thunder of his power: but we cannot, consistently with the principles of reason or of sound faith, suppose him to utter what is contrary to reason, though it may be different from it. Revelation utters a voice in the silence of reason, but does not contradict it: it throws a light on objects too distant for the unassisted eye to behold. But it does not pervert our natural organs of vision, with respect to objects within their reach. Reason and religion are therefore consistent, but not the same, nor equally self-evident. All this, we think, is clear and plain. But Mr. Coleridge likes to darken and perplex every question of which he treats. So, in the passage above quoted, he affirms that Religion is its own evidence, to confound one class of readers; and he afterwards asserts that Reason is founded on faith, to astonish another. He proceeds indeed by the *differential method* in all questions; and his chief care, in which he is tolerably successful, is *not* to agree with any set of men or opinions. We pass over his Jeremiad on the French Revolution,—his discovery that the state of public opinion has a considerable influence on the state of public affairs, particularly in turbulent times,—his apology for imitating St. Paul by quoting Shakespear, and many others: for if we were to collect all the riches of absurdity in this Discourse, we should never have done. But there is one passage, upon which he has plainly taken so much pains, that we *must* give it.

'A calm and detailed examination of the facts, justifies me to my own mind, in hazarding the bold assertion, that the fearful blunders

of the late dread Revolution, and all the calamitous mistakes of its opponents, from its commencement even to the era of loftier principles and wiser measures (an era, that began with, and ought to be named from, the war of the Spanish and Portuguese insurgents), every failure, with all its gloomy results, may be unanswerably deduced, from the neglect of some maxim or other that had been established by clear reasoning and plain facts, in the writings of Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, Bacon, or Harrington. These are red-letter names, even in the almanacks of worldly wisdom: and yet I dare challenge all the critical benches of infidelity, to point out any one important truth, any one efficient practical direction or warning, which did not preexist, and for the most part in a sounder, more intelligible, and more comprehensive form IN THE BIBLE.'

'In addition to this, the Hebrew legislator, and the other inspired poets, prophets, historians and moralists, of the Jewish church, have two immense advantages in their favour. First, their particular rules and prescripts flow directly and visibly from universal principles, as from a fountain: they flow from principles and ideas that are not so properly said to be confirmed by reason, as to be reason itself! Principles, in act and procession, disjoined from which, and from the emotions that inevitably accompany the actual intuition of their truth, the widest maxims of prudence are like arms without hearts, muscles without nerves. Secondly, from the very nature of these principles, as taught in the Bible, they are understood, in exact proportion as they are believed and felt. The regulator is never separated from the main spring. For the words of the Apostle are literally and philosophically true: *We* (that is the human race) *live by faith*. Whatever we do or know, that in kind is different from the brute creation, has its origin in a determination of the reason to have faith and trust in itself. This, its first act of faith, is scarcely less than identical with its own being. *Implicitè*, it is the copula —it contains the *possibility*—of every position, to which there exists any correspondence in reality. It is itself, therefore, the realizing principle, the spiritual substratum of the whole complex body of truths. This primal act of faith is enunciated in the word, God: a faith not derived from experience, but its ground and source; and without which, the fleeting *chaos of facts* would no more form experience, than the dust of the grave can of itself make a living man. The imperative and oracular form of the inspired Scripture, is *the form of reason itself*, in all things purely rational and moral.

'If it be the word of Divine Wisdom, we might anticipate, that it would in all things be distinguished from other books, as the Supreme Reason, whose knowledge is creative, and antecedent to the

things known, is distinguished from the understanding, or creaturely mind of the individual, the acts of which are posterior to the things it records and arranges. Man alone was created in the image of God: a position groundless and inexplicable, if *the reason* in man do not differ from *the understanding*. For this the inferior animals (many at least) possess *in degree*: and assuredly the divine image or idea is not a thing of degrees,' &c. &c. &c.

There is one short passage, just afterwards, in which the author makes an easy transition from cant to calumny: and, with equal credit and safety to himself, insults and traduces the dead. 'One confirmation of the latter assertion you may find in the history of our country, written by the same Scotch Philosopher, who devoted his life to the undermining of the Christian Religion; and *expended his last breath in a blasphemous regret, that he had not survived it!*' This last assertion is a gratuitous poetical fabrication, as mean as it is malignant. With respect to Mr. Hume's History, here spoken of with ignorant petulance, it is beyond dispute the most judicious, profound, and acute of all historical compositions, though the friends of liberty may admit, with the advocate of servility, that it has its defects;—and the scepticism into which its ingenious and most amiable author was betrayed in matters of religion, must always be lamented by the lovers of genius and virtue. The venom of the sting meant to be inflicted on the memory of 'the Scotch Philosopher,' seems to have returned to the writer's own bosom, and to have exhausted itself in the following bloated passage.

'At the annunciation of PRINCIPLES, of IDEAS, the soul of man awakes, and starts up, as an exile in a far distant land at the unexpected sounds of his native language, when, after long years of absence, and almost of oblivion, he is suddenly addressed in his own mother tongue. He weeps for joy, and embraces the speaker as his brother. *How else can we explain the fact so honourable to Great Britain,*[1] *that the poorest amongst us will contend with as much enthusiasm as the richest for the rights of property?* These rights are the spheres and necessary conditions of free agency. But free agency contains the idea of the free will; and in this he intuitively knows the sublimity, and the infinite hopes, fears, and capabilities of his own (English) nature. On what other ground but the *cognateness of ideas* and principles to man as man, does the nameless soldier rush to the combat in defence of the liberties or *the honour* of his country? Even men, wofully neglectful of the principles of religion, will shed their blood for its truth.' p. 30.

How does this passage agree with Mr. C.'s general contempt of

[1] Why to Great Britain alone? R.

mankind, and that especial aversion to 'Mob-Sycophancy' which has marked him from the cradle, and which formerly led him to give up the periodical paper of the Watchman, and to break off in the middle of his '*Conciones ad Populum*?' A few plain instincts, and a little common sense, are all that the most popular of our popular writers attribute to the people, or rely on for their success in addressing them. But Mr. Coleridge, the mob-hating Mr. Coleridge, here supposes them intuitively to perceive the cabalistical visions of German metaphysics; and compliments the poorest peasant, and the nameless soldier, not only on the cognateness of their ideas and principles to man as man, but on their immediate and joyous excitation at the mere annunciation of such delightful things as '*Principles* and *Ideas*.' Our mystic, in a Note, finds a confirmation of this cognateness of the most important truths to the vulgarest of the people, in 'an anecdote told with much humour in one of Goldsmith's Essays.' Poor Goldy! How he would have stared at this transcendental inference from his humorous anecdote! He would have felt as awkwardly as Gulliver did, when the monkey at the palace of Brobdignag took him an airing on the tiles, and almost broke his neck by the honour. Mr. Coleridge's patronage is of the same unwieldy kind.—The Preacher next gives his authorities for reading the Scriptures. They are—Heraclitus and Horace.—In earnest? In good sooth, and in sad and sober earnest.

'Or would you wish for authorities?—for great examples?—You may find them in the writings of Thuanus, of Lord Clarendon, of Sir Thomas More, of Raleigh; and in the life and letters of the heroic Gustavus Adolphus. But these, though eminent statesmen, were Christians, and might lie under the thraldom of habit and prejudice. I will refer you then to authorities of two great men, both Pagans; but removed from each other by many centuries, and not more distant in their ages than in their characters and situations. The first shall be that of Heraclitus, the sad and recluse philosopher. Πολυμαθιη νοον οὐ διδασκει· Σιβυλλα δε μαινομενῳ στόματι αγελαστα και ακαλλωπιστα και αμυριστα φθεγγομενη, χιλιων ετων εξικνεται τῃ φωνῃ δια τον θεον.[1] Shall we hesitate to apply to the prophets of God, what could be affirmed of the Sibylls by a philosopher whom Socrates, the prince of philosophers, venerated for the profundity of his wisdom?

'For the other, I will refer you to the darling of the polished

[1] 'Multiscience (or a variety and quantity of acquired knowledge) does not teach intelligence. But the Sibyll with wild enthusiastic mouth shrilling forth unmirthful, inornate, and unperfumed truths, reaches to a thousand years with her voice through the power of God.'

court of Augustus, to the man whose works have been in all ages deemed the models of good sense, and are still the pocket-companions of those who pride themselves on uniting the scholar with the gentleman. This accomplished man of the world has given an account of the subjects of conversation between the illustrious statesmen who governed, and the brightest luminaries who then adorned, the empire of the civilized world—

> 'Sermo oritur non de villis domibusve alienis
> Nec, male, nec ne lepus saltet. Sed quod magis ad nos
> Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus: utrumne
> Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati?
> Et qua sit natura boni? summumque quid eius?'

It is not easy to conceive any thing better than this;—only the next passage beats it hollow, and is itself surpassed by the one after it, 'as Alps o'er Alps arise.'

So far Mr. Coleridge has indulged himself in 'a preparatory heat,' and said nothing about the Bible. But now he girds himself up for his main purpose, places himself at the helm, and undertakes to conduct the statesman to his desired haven in Scripture prophecy and history. 'But do you require some one or more particular passage from the Bible, that may at once illustrate and exemplify its applicability to the changes and fortunes of empires? Of the numerous chapters that relate to the Jewish tribes, their enemies and allies, before and after their division into two kingdoms, it would be more difficult to state a single one, from which some guiding light might *not* be struck.' Does Mr. Coleridge then condescend to oblige us with any one? Nothing can be farther from his thoughts. He is here off again at a tangent, and does not return to the subject for the next seven pages. When he does—it is in the following explicit manner.—'But I refer to the demand. *Were it my object to touch on the present state of public affairs in this kingdom, or on the prospective measures in agitation respecting our sister island, I would direct your most serious meditations to the latter period of the reign of Solomon, and to the revolutions in the reign of Rehoboam, his successor. But I should tread on glowing embers: I will turn to the causes of the revolution, and fearful chastisement of France.*' Let the reader turn to the first book of Kings, in which the parallel passage to our own history at the present crisis stands, according to our author, so alarmingly conspicuous; and he will not be surprised that Mr. Coleridge found himself 'treading on glowing embers.' The insidious loyalty or covert Jacobinism of this same parallel, which he declines drawing on account of its extreme applicability, is indeed beyond our compre-

hension, and not a less 'curious specimen of psychology,' than the one immediately preceding it, in which he proves the doctrine of *divine right* to be revealed in an especial manner in the Hebrew Scriptures.

We should proceed to notice that part of the Sermon, where the orator rails at the public praises of Dr. Bell, and abuses Joseph Lancaster, *con amore*. Nothing more flat and vapid, in wit or argument, was ever put before the public, which he treats with such contempt. Of the wit, take the following choice sample.

'But the phrase of the Reading Public, which occasioned this note, brings to my mind the mistake of a lethargic Dutch traveller, who returning highly gratified from a showman's caravan, which he had been tempted to enter by the words, The Learned Pig, gilt on the pannels, met another caravan of a similar shape, with The Reading Fly on it, in letters of the same size and splendour. "Why, dis is voonders above voonders!" exclaims the Dutchman; takes his seat as first comer; and, soon fatigued by waiting, and by the very hush and intensity of his expectation, gives way to his constitutional somnolence, from which he is roused by the supposed showman at Hounslow, with a—"*In what name, Sir! was your place taken? Are you booked all the way for Reading?*"—Now a Reading Public is (to my mind) more marvellous still, and in the third tier of "voonders above voonders!"'

Mr. Coleridge's wit and sentimentality do not seem to have settled accounts together; for in the very next page after this 'third tier of wonders,' he says—

'And here my apprehensions point to two opposite errors. The first consists in a disposition to think, that as the peace of nations has been disturbed by the diffusion of a false light, it may be re-established by excluding the people from all knowledge and all prospect of amelioration. O! never, never! Reflection and stirrings of mind, with all their restlessness, and all the errors that result from their imperfection, from the *Too much*, because *Too little*, are come into the world. The powers that awaken and foster the spirit of curiosity, are to be found in every village: Books are in every hovel: The infant's cries are hushed with *picture*-books: and the Cottager's child sheds its first bitter tears over pages, which render it impossible for the man to be treated or governed as a child. Here, as in so many other cases, the inconveniences that have arisen from a thing's having become too general, are best removed by making it universal.' p. 49.

And yet, with Mr. Coleridge, a reading public is 'voonders above voonders'—a strange phrase, and yet no fiction! The public is become a reading public, down to the cottager's child; and he thanks

God for it—for that great moral steam-engine, Dr. Bell's original and unsophisticated plan, which he considers as an especial gift of Providence to the human race—thus about to be converted into one great reading public; and yet he utters his *Profaccia* upon it with a desponding sigh; and proposes, as a remedy, to put this spirit which has gone forth, under the tutelage of churchwardens, to cant against 'liberal ideas,' and 'the jargon of this enlightened age;'—in other words, to turn this vast machine against itself, and make it a go-cart of corruption, servility, superstition and tyranny. Mr. Coleridge's first horror is, that there should be a reading public: his next hope is to prevent them from reaping an atom of benefit from 'reflection and stirrings of mind, with all their restlessness.'

The conclusion of this discourse is even more rhapsodical than the former part of it; and we give the pulpit or rostrum from which Mr. Coleridge is supposed to deliver it, 'high enthroned above all height,' the decided preference over that throne of dulness and of nonsense which Pope did erst erect for the doubtful merits of Colley and Sir Richard.

The notes are better, and but a little better than the text. We might select, as specimens of laborious foolery, the passage in which the writer defends *second sight*, to prove that he has unjustly been accused of visionary paradox, or hints that a disbelief in ghosts and witches is no great sign of the wisdom of the age, or that in which he gives us to understand that Sir Isaac Newton was a great astrologer, or Mr. Locke no conjurer. But we prefer (for our limits are straitened) the author's description of a green field, which he prefaces by observing, that 'the book of Nature has been the music of gentle and pious minds in all ages; and that it is the poetry of all human nature to read it likewise in a figurative sense, and to find therein correspondences and symbols of a spiritual nature.'

Mr. Coleridge's Description of a Green Field.

'I have at this moment before me, in the flowery meadow on which my eye is now reposing, one of Nature's most soothing chapters, in which there is no lamenting word, no one character of guilt or anguish. For never can I look and meditate on the vegetable creation, without a feeling similar to that with which we gaze at a beautiful infant that has fed itself asleep at its mother's bosom, and smiles in its strange dream of obscure yet happy sensations. The same tender and genial pleasure takes possession of me, and this pleasure is checked and drawn inward by the like aching melancholy, by the same whispered remonstrance, and made restless by a similar impulse of aspiration. It seems as if the soul said to herself—

"From this state" (from that of a flowery meadow) "hast *thou* fallen! Such shouldst thou still become, thyself all permeable to a holier power! Thyself at once hidden and glorified by its own transparency, as the accidental and dividuous in this quiet and harmonious object is subjected to the life and light of nature which shines in it, even as the transmitted power, love and wisdom, of God over all fills, and shines through, Nature! But what the plant *is*, by an act not its own, and unconsciously—*that* must thou *make* thyself to *become!* must by prayer, and by a watchful and unresisting spirit, *join* at least with the preventive and assisting grace to *make* thyself, in that light of conscience which inflameth not, and with that knowledge which puffeth not up."'

This will do. It is well observed by Hobbes, that 'it is by means of words only that a man becometh excellently wise or excellently foolish.'

COLERIDGE'S LITERARY LIFE

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THERE are some things readable in these volumes; and if the learned author could only have been persuaded to make them a little more conformable to their title, we have no doubt that they would have been the most popular of all his productions. Unfortunately, however, this work is not so properly an account of his Life and Opinions, as an Apology for them. 'It will be found,' says our Auto-Biographer, 'that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally.' What then, it may be asked, is the work taken up with? With the announcement of an explanation of the author's Political and Philosophical creed, to be contained in another work—with a prefatory introduction of 200 pages to an Essay on the difference between Fancy and Imagination, which was intended to form part of this, but has been suppressed, at the request of a judicious friend, as unintelligible—with a catalogue of Mr. Southey's domestic virtues, and author-like qualifications—a candid defence of the Lyrical Ballads—a critique on Mr. Wordsworth's poetry—quotations from the Friend—and attacks on the Edinburgh Review. There are, in fact, only two or three passages in the work which relate to the details of the author's life,—such as the account of his school-education, and of his setting up the Watchman newspaper. We shall make sure of the first of these curious documents, before we completely lose ourselves in the multiplicity of his speculative opinions.

'At school, I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible,

though at the same time, a very severe master, the Rev. James Bowyer, many years Head Master of the Grammar-School, Christ's Hospital. He early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again, of Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius (in such extracts as I then read), Terence, and, above all, the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the so called silver and brazen ages, but with even those of the Augustan era; and, on grounds of plain sense, and universal logic, to see and assert the superiority of the former, in the truth and nativeness both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek tragic poets, he made us read Shakespeare and Milton as lessons: and they were the lessons, too, which required most time and trouble to *bring up*, so as to escape his censure. I learnt from him, that Poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember, that, availing himself of the synonimes to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, *why* it would not have answered the same purpose; and *wherein* consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

'I had just entered on my seventeenth year, when the Sonnets of Mr. Bowles, twenty in number, and just then published in a quarto pamphlet, were first made known and presented to me, by a schoolfellow who had quitted us for the University, and who, during the whole time that he was in our first form (or, in our school language, a Grecian), had been my patron and protector. I refer to Dr. Middleton, the truly learned, and every way excellent Bishop of Calcutta—

> 'Qui laudibus amplis
> Ingenium celebrare meum, calamumque solebat,
> Calcar agens animo validum. Non omnia terræ
> Obruta! Vivit amor, vivit dolor! Ora negatur
> Dulcia conspicere; at flere et meminisse relictum est.'
>
> *Petr. Ep. Lib. 7. Ep.* 1.

'It was a double pleasure to me, and still remains a tender recollection, that I should have received from a friend so revered, the first knowledge of a poet, by whose works, year after year, I was so enthusiastically delighted and inspired. My earliest acquaintances will not have forgotten the undisciplined eagerness and impetuous

zeal, with which I laboured to make proselytes, not only of my companions, but of all with whom I conversed, of whatever rank, and in whatever place. As my school finances did not permit me to purchase copies, I made, within less than a year and an half, more than forty transcriptions, as the best presents I could offer to those who had in any way won my regard. And, with almost equal delight, did I receive the three or four following publications of the same author.

'Though I have seen and known enough of mankind to be well aware that I shall perhaps stand alone in my creed, and that it will be well, if I subject myself to no worse charge than that of singularity; I am not therefore deterred from avowing, that I regard, and ever have regarded the obligations of intellect among the most sacred of the claims of gratitude. A valuable thought, or a particular train of thoughts, gives me additional pleasure, when I can safely refer and attribute it to the conversation or correspondence of another. My obligations to Mr. Bowles were indeed important, and for radical good. *At a very premature age, even before my fifteenth year, I had bewildered myself in metaphysicks, and in theological controversy. Nothing else pleased me. History, and particular facts, lost all interest in my mind.* Poetry (though for a school-boy of that age, I was above par in English versification, and had already produced two or three compositions which, I may venture to say, without reference to my age, were somewhat above mediocrity, and which had gained me more credit, than the sound, good sense of my old master was at all pleased with)—*poetry itself, yea novels and romances, became insipid to me.* In my friendless wanderings on our *leave-days*, (for I was an orphan, and had scarcely any connexions in London), highly was I delighted, if any passenger, especially if he were drest in black, would enter into conversation with me. For I soon found the means of directing it to my favourite subjects

> Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
> Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

'This preposterous pursuit was, beyond doubt, injurious, both to my natural powers, and to the progress of my education. It would perhaps have been destructive, had it been continued; but from this I was auspiciously withdrawn, partly indeed by an accidental introduction to an amiable family, chiefly however by the genial influence of a style of poetry, so tender, and yet so manly, so natural and real, and yet so dignified and harmonious, as the sonnets, &c. of Mr. Bowles! Well were it for me, perhaps, had I never relapsed into

the same mental disease; if I had continued to pluck the flower, and reap the harvest from the cultivated surface, instead of delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths. But if in after-time I have sought a refuge from bodily pain and mismanaged sensibility, in abstruse researches, which exercised the strength and subtlety of the understanding, without awakening the feelings of the heart; still there was a long and blessed interval, during which my natural faculties were allowed to expand, and my original tendencies to develop themselves—my fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds.' p. 17.

Mr. Coleridge seems to us, from this early association, to overrate the merits of Bowles's Sonnets, which he prefers to Warton's, which last we, in our turn, prefer to Wordsworth's, and indeed to any Sonnets in the language. He cannot, however, be said to overrate the extent of the intellectual obligations which he thinks he owes to his favourite writer. If the study of Mr. Bowles's poems could have effected a permanent cure of that 'preposterous' state of mind which he has above described, his gratitude, we admit, should be boundless: But the disease, we fear, was in the mind itself; and the study of poetry, instead of counteracting, only gave force to the original propensity; and Mr. Coleridge has ever since, from the combined forces of poetic levity and metaphysic bathos, been trying to fly, not in the air, but under ground—playing at hawk and buzzard between sense and nonsense,—floating or sinking in fine Kantean categories, in a state of suspended animation 'twixt dreaming and awake,—quitting the plain ground of 'history and particular facts' for the first butterfly theory, fancy-bred from the maggots of his brain,—going up in an air-balloon filled with fetid gas from the writings of Jacob Behmen and the mystics, and coming down in a parachute made of the soiled and fashionable leaves of the Morning Post,—promising us an account of the Intellectual System of the Universe, and putting us off with a reference to a promised dissertation on the Logos, introductory to an intended commentary on the entire Gospel of St. John. In the above extract, he tells us, with a degree of *naïveté* not usual with him, that, 'even before his fifteenth year, history and particular facts had lost all interest in his mind.' Yet, so little is he himself aware of the influence which this feeling still continues to exert over his mind, and of the way in which it has mixed itself up in his philosophical faith, that he afterwards makes it the test and definition of a sound understanding and true genius, that 'the mind is affected by thoughts, rather than by things; and only then feels the *requisite* interest even for the most important events and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into

thoughts.' p. 30. We do not see, after this, what right Mr. C. has to complain of those who say that he is neither the most literal nor logical of mortals; and the worst that has ever been said of him is, that he is the least so. If it is the proper business of the philosopher to dream over theories, and to neglect or gloss over facts, to fit them to his theories or his conscience; we confess we know of few writers, ancient or modern, who have come nearer to the perfection of this character than the author before us.

After a desultory and unsatisfactory attempt (Chap. II.) to account for and disprove the common notion of the irritability of authors, Mr. Coleridge proceeds (by what connexion we know not) to a full, true and particular account of the personal, domestic, and literary habits of his friend Mr. Southey,—to all which we have but one objection, namely, that it seems quite unnecessary, as we never heard them impugned,—except indeed by the Antijacobin writers, here quoted by Mr. Coleridge, who is no less impartial as a friend, than candid as an enemy. The passage altogether is not a little remarkable.

'It is not, however,' says our author, 'from grateful recollections only, that I have been impelled thus to leave these my deliberate sentiments on record; but in some sense as a debt of justice to the man, whose name has been so often connected with mine, for evil to which he is a stranger. As a specimen, I subjoin part of a note from the 'Beauties of the Anti-Jacobin,' in which, having previously informed the Public that I had been dishonoured at Cambridge for preaching Deism, at a time when, for my youthful ardour in defence of Christianity, I was decried as a bigot by the proselytes of French philosophy, the writer concludes with these words—'*Since this time he has left his native country, commenced citizen of the world, left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute. Ex his disce his friends, Lamb and Southey.*' 'With severest truth,' continues Mr. Coleridge, 'it may be asserted, that it would not be easy to select two men more exemplary in their domestic affections, than those whose names were thus printed at full length, as in the same rank of morals with a denounced infidel and fugitive, who had left his children fatherless, and his wife destitute! *Is it surprising that many good men remained longer than perhaps they otherwise would have done, adverse to a party which encouraged and openly rewarded the authors of such atrocious calumnies?*' p. 71.

With us, we confess the wonder does not lie there:—all that surprises us is, that the objects of these atrocious calumnies were *ever* reconciled to the authors of them;—for the calumniators were the party itself. The Cannings, the Giffords, and the Freres, have

never made any apology for the abuse which they then heaped upon every nominal friend of freedom; and yet Mr. Coleridge thinks it necessary to apologize in the name of all good men, for having remained so long adverse to a party which recruited upon such a bounty; and seems not obscurely to intimate that they had such effectual means of propagating their slanders against those good men who differed with them, that most of the latter found there was no other way of keeping their good name but by giving up their principles, and joining in the same venal cry against all those who did not become apostates or converts, ministerial Editors, and 'laurel-honouring Laureates' like themselves!—What! at the very moment when this writer is complaining of a foul and systematic conspiracy against the characters of himself, and his most intimate friends, he suddenly stops short in his half-finished burst of involuntary indignation, and ends with a lamentable affectation of surprise at the otherwise unaccountable slowness of good men in yielding implicit confidence to a party, who had such powerful arts of conversion in their hands,—who could with impunity, and triumphantly, take away by atrocious calumnies the characters of all who disdained to be their tools, and rewarded with honours, places, and pensions all those who were. This is pitiful enough, we confess; but it is too painful to be dwelt on.

Passing from the Laureate's old Antijacobin, to his present Anti-ministerial persecutors—'*Publicly*,' exclaims Mr. Coleridge, 'has Mr. Southey been reviled by men, who (I would fain hope, for the honour of human nature) hurled fire-brands against a figure of their own imagination,—*publicly* have his talents been depreciated, his principles denounced.' This is very fine and lofty, no doubt; but we wish Mr. C. would speak a little plainer. Mr. Southey has come voluntarily before the public; and all the world has a right to speak of his publications. It is those only that have been either depretiated or denounced. We are not aware, at least, of any attacks that have been made, publicly or privately, on his private life or morality. The charge is, that he wrote democratical nonsense in his youth; and that he has not only taken to write against democracy in his maturer age, but has abused and reviled those who adhere to his former opinions; and accepted of emoluments from the party which formerly calumniated him, for those good services. Now, what has Mr. Coleridge to oppose to this? Mr. Southey's private character! He evades the only charge brought against him, by repelling one not brought against him, except by his Antijacobin patrons—and answers for his friend, as if he was playing at cross-purposes. Some people say, that Mr. Southey has deserted the cause of liberty: Mr.

Coleridge tells us, that he has not separated from his wife. They say, that he has changed his opinions: Mr. Coleridge says, that he keeps his appointments; and has even invented a new word, *reliability*, to express his exemplariness in this particular. It is also objected, that the worthy Laureate was as extravagant in his early writings, as he is virulent in his present ones: Mr. Coleridge answers, that he is an early riser, and not a late sitter up. It is further alleged, that he is arrogant and shallow in political discussion, and clamours for vengeance in a cowardly and intemperate tone: Mr. Coleridge assures us, that he eats, drinks, and sleeps moderately. It is said that he must either have been very hasty in taking up his first opinions, or very unjustifiable in abandoning them for their contraries; and Mr. Coleridge observes, that Mr. Southey exhibits, in his own person and family, all the regularity and praiseworthy punctuality of an eight-day clock. With all this we have nothing to do. Not only have we said nothing against this gentleman's private virtues, but we have regularly borne testimony to his talents and attainments as an author, while we have been compelled to take notice of his defects. Till this panegyric of Mr. Coleridge, indeed, we do not know where there was so much praise of him to be found as in our pages. Does Mr. Coleridge wish to get a monopoly for criticising the works of his friends? If we had a particular grudge against any of them, we might perhaps apply to him for his assistance.

Of Mr. Southey's prose writings we have had little opportunity to speak; but we should speak moderately. He has a clear and easy style, and brings a large share of information to most subjects he handles. But, on practical and political matters, we cannot think him a writer of any weight. He has too little sympathy with the common pursuits, the follies, the vices, and even the virtues of the rest of mankind, to have any tact or depth of insight into the actual characters or manners of men. He is in this respect a mere book-worm, shut up in his study, and too attentive to his literary duty to mind what is passing about him. He has no humour. His wit is at once scholastic and vulgar. As to general principles of any sort, we see no traces of any thing like them in any of his writings. He shows the same contempt for abstract reasoning that Mr. Coleridge has for 'history and particular facts.' Even his intimacy with the metaphysical author of the 'Friend,' with whom he has chimed in, both in poetry and politics, in verse and prose, in Jacobinism and Antijacobinism, any time these twenty years, has never inoculated him with the most distant admiration of Hartley, or Berkeley, or Jacob Behmen, or Spinosa, or Kant, or Fichte, or Schelling. His essays are in fact the contents of his commonplace-book, strung

together with little thought or judgment, and rendered marketable by their petulant adaptation to party-purposes—'full of wise saws and modern instances'—with assertions for proofs—conclusions that savour more of a hasty temper than patient thinking—supported by learned authorities that oppress the slenderness of his materials, and quarrel with one another. But our business is not with him; and we leave him to his studies.

With chap. iv. begins the formidable ascent of that mountainous and barren ridge of clouds piled on precipices and precipices on clouds, from the top of which the author deludes us with a view of the Promised Land that divides the regions of Fancy from those of the Imagination, and extends through 200 pages with various inequalities and declensions to the end of the volume. The object of this long-winding metaphysical march, which resembles a patriarchal journey, is to point out and settle the true grounds of Mr. Wordsworth's claim to originality as a poet; which, if we rightly understand the deduction, turns out to be, that there is nothing peculiar about him; and that his poetry, in so far as it is good for anything at all, is just like any other good poetry. The learned author, indeed, judiciously observes, that Mr. Wordsworth would never have been 'idly and absurdly' considered as 'the founder of a school in poetry,' if he had not, by some strange mistake, announced the fact himself in his preface to the Lyrical Ballads. This, it must be owned, looks as if Mr. Wordsworth thought more of his *peculiar* pretensions than Mr. Coleridge appears to do, and really furnishes some excuse for those who took the poet at his word; for which idle and hasty conclusion, moreover, his friend acknowledges that *there was* some little foundation in diverse silly and puerile passages of that collection, equally unworthy of the poet's great genius and classical taste.

We shall leave it to Mr. Wordsworth, however, to settle the relative worthlessness of these poems with his critical patron, and also to ascertain whether his commentator has discovered, either his *real* or his *probable* meaning in writing that Preface,—and should now proceed with Mr. Coleridge up those intricate and inaccessible steeps to which he invites our steps. 'It has been hinted,' says he, with characteristic simplicity, 'that metaphysics and psychology have long been my hobby-horse. But to have a hobby-horse, and to be vain of it, are so commonly found together, that they pass almost for the same.' *We own the soft impeachment*, as Mrs. Malaprop says, and can with difficulty resist the temptation of accepting this invitation—especially as it is accompanied with a sort of challenge. 'Those at least,' he adds, 'who have taken so much pains to render me ridiculous for a perversion of taste, and have supported the charge by

attributing strange notions to me, on no other authority than their own conjectures, owe it to themselves as well as to me, not to refuse their attention to my own statement of the theory which I *do* acknowledge, or shrink from the trouble of examining the grounds on which I rest it, or the arguments which I offer in its justification.' But, in spite of all this, we must not give way to temptation—and cannot help feeling, that the whole of this discussion is so utterly unreadable in Mr. Coleridge, that it would be most presumptuous to hope that it would become otherwise in our hands. We shall dismiss the whole of this metaphysical investigation, therefore, into the law of association and the nature of fancy, by shortly observing, that we can by no means agree with Mr. C. in refusing to Hobbes the merit of originality in promulgating that law, with its consequences—that we agree with him, generally, in his refutation of Hartley—and that we totally dissent from his encomium on Kant and his followers.

With regard to the claims of the philosopher of Malmesbury as the first discoverer of the principle of association, as it is now understood among metaphysicians, Mr. C. thinks fit to deny it *in toto*, because Descartes's work, 'De Methodo,' in which there is an intimation of the same doctrine, preceded Hobbes's 'De Natura Humana' *by a whole year*.—What an interval to invent and mature a whole system in!—But we conceive that Hobbes has a strict claim to the merit of originality in this respect, because he is the first writer who laid down this principle as *the sole and universal law* of connexion among our ideas:—which principle Hartley afterwards illustrated and applied to an infinite number of particular cases, but did not assert the general theorem itself more broadly or explicitly. We deny that the statement of this principle, as *the* connecting band of our ideas, is to be found in any of those writers before Hobbes, whom Mr. Coleridge enumerates; Descartes or Melancthon, or those more 'illustrious obscure,' Ammerbach, or Ludovicus Vives, or even Aristotle. It is not the having remarked, that association was one source of connexion among certain ideas, that would anticipate this discovery or the theory of Hartley; but the asserting, that this principle was alone sufficient to account for every operation of the human mind, and that there was no other source of connexion among our ideas,—a proposition which Hobbes was undoubtedly the first to assert, and by the assertion of which he did certainly anticipate the system of Hartley; for all that the latter could do, or has attempted to do, after this, was to prove the proposition in detail, or to reduce all the phenomena to this one general law. That Hobbes was in fact the original inventor of the doctrine of Association, and of the modern system of philosophy in general, is matter of fact and history; as to which, we are surprised

that Mr. C. should profess any doubt, and which we had gratified ourselves by illustrating by a series of citations from his greater works,—which nothing but a sense of the prevailing indifference to such discussions prevents us from laying before our readers.

As for the great German oracle Kant, we must take the liberty to say, that his system appears to us the most wilful and monstrous absurdity that ever was invented. If the French theories of the mind were too chemical, this is too mechanical:—if the one referred every thing to nervous sensibility, the other refers every thing to the test of muscular resistance, and voluntary prowess. It is an enormous heap of dogmatical and hardened assertions, advanced in contradiction to all former systems, and all unsystematical opinions and impressions. He has but one method of getting over difficulties:—when he is at a loss to account for any thing, and cannot give a reason for it, he turns short round upon the inquirer, and says that it is self-evident. If he cannot make good an inference upon acknowledged premises, or known methods of reasoning, he coolly refers the whole to a new class of ideas, and the operation of some unknown faculty, which he has invented for the purpose, and which he assures you *must* exist,—because there is no other proof of it. His whole theory is machinery and scaffolding—an elaborate account of what he has undertaken to do, because no one else has been able to do it—and an *assumption* that he has done it, because he has undertaken it. If the will were to go for the deed, and to be confident were to be wise, he would indeed be the prince of philosophers. For example, he sets out with urging the indispensable necessity of answering Hume's argument on the origin of our idea of cause and effect; and because he can find no answer to this argument, in the experimental philosophy, he affirms, that this idea *must be* 'a self-evident truth, contained in the first forms or categories of the understanding;' that is, the thing must be as he would have it, whether it is so or not. Again, he argues that external objects exist because they seem to exist; and yet he denies that we know any thing at all about the matter, further than their appearances. He defines beauty to be perfection, and virtue to consist in a conformity to our duty; with other such deliberate truisms; and then represents necessity as inconsistent with morality, and insists on the existence and certainty of the free-will as a faculty necessary to explain the *moral sense*, which could not exist without it. This transcendental philosopher is also pleased to affirm, in so many words, that we have neither any possible idea, nor any possible proof of the existence of the Soul, God, or Immortality, by means of the ordinary faculties of sense, understanding, or reason; and he therefore (like a man who had been employed to construct a machine for some

particular purpose), invents a new faculty, for the admission and demonstration of these important truths, *namely, the practical reason*; in other words, the will or determination that these things should be infinitely true because they are infinitely desireable to the human mind,—though he says it is impossible for the human mind to have any idea whatever of these objects, either as true or desirable. But we turn gladly from absurdities that have not even the merit of being amusing; and leave Mr. Coleridge to the undisturbed adoration of an idol who will have few other worshippers in this country. His own speculations are, beyond all comparison, more engaging.

In chap. IX. Mr. Coleridge, taking leave of that 'sound book-learnedness' which he had opposed, in the Lay Sermon, to the upstart pretensions of modern literature, praises the inspired ignorance, upward flights, and inward yearnings of Jacob Behmen, George Fox and De Thoyras, and proceeds to defend himself against the charge of plagiarism, of which he suspects that he may be suspected by the readers of Schlegel and Schelling, when he comes to unfold, in fulness of time, the mysterious laws of the drama and the human mind. And thereafter, the 'extravagant and erring' author takes leave of the Pantheism of Spinoza, of Proclus, and Gemistius Pletho, of the philosopher of Nola, 'whom the idolaters of Rome, the predecessors of that good old man, the present Pope, burnt as an atheist in the year 1660;' of the *Noumenon*, or Thing in itself; of Fichte's ORDO ORDINANS, or exoteric God; of Simon Grynæus, Barclay's Argenis, and Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, from whom the author 'cites a cluster of citations, to amuse the reader, as with a voluntary before a sermon'—to plunge into Chap. X., entitled 'A Chapter of Digressions and Anecdotes, as an interlude preceding that on the Nature and Genesis of the Imagination or Plastic Power!'

As this latter chapter, by the advice of a correspondent, has been omitted, we must make the most of what is left, and 'wander down into a lower world obscure and wild,' to give the reader an account of Mr. Coleridge's setting up the Watchman, which is one of the first things to which he *digresses*, in the tenth chapter of his Literary Biography. Out of regard to Mr. C. as well as to our readers, we give our longest extract from this narrative part of the work—which is more likely to be popular than any other part—and is, upon the whole, more pleasingly written. We cannot say much, indeed, either for the wit or the soundness of judgment it displays. But it is an easy, gossipping, garrulous account of youthful adventures—by a man sufficiently fond of talking of himself, and sufficiently disposed to magnify small matters into ideal importance.

'Toward the close of the first year from the time that, in an

inauspicious hour, I left the friendly cloysters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever-honoured, Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded, by sundry Philanthropists and Antipolemists, to set on foot a periodical work, entitled THE WATCHMAN, that (according to the general motto of the work) *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only Fourpence. Accordingly, with a flaming prospectus, "*Knowledge is power*," &c. *to try the state of the political atmosphere*, and so forth, I set off on a tour to the North, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers; preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as a hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon might be seen on me. For I was at that time, and long after, though a Trinitarian *(i.e. ad normam Platonis)* in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a *psilanthropist*, one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection, rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of (what I believed to be) the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm, I did not think of *myself* at all.

'My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow-chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face κατέμφασιν! I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, *pingui-nitescent*, cut in a straight line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder-eyebrows, that looked like a scorched *after-math* from a last week's shaving. His coat-collar behind in perfect unison, both of colour and lustre, with the coarse, yet glib cordage, that I suppose he called his hair, and which, with a *bend* inward at the nape of the neck, (the only approach to flexure in his whole figure), slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance, lank, dark, very *hard*, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a *used* gridiron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the *thorough-*

bred, a true lover of liberty; and (I was informed) had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in the Revelation, *that spoke like a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first *stroke* in the new business I had undertaken, of an author; yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion, after some imperfect sentences, and a multitude of *hums* and *haas*, abandoned the cause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros the tallow-chandler, varying my notes through the whole gamut of eloquence, from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter, from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied; and, beginning with the captivity of nations, I ended with the near approach of the millennium; finishing the whole with some of my own verses, describing that glorious state, out of the *Religious Musings*.

—'"Such delights,
As float to earth, permitted visitants!
When in some hour of solemn jubilee
The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open: and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,
And they that from the chrystal river of life
Spring up on freshen'd wings, ambrosial gales!"

'My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though (as I was afterwards told on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial) it was a *melting* day with him. And what, Sir! (he said, after a short pause) might the cost be? *Only* four-pence, (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal bathos of that *four-pence*!) *only four-pence*, *Sir*, *each Number*, *to be published on every eighth day*. That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much did you say there was to be for the money? *Thirty-two pages*, *Sir! large octavo*, *closely printed*. Thirty and two pages? Bless me; why, except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that 's more than I ever reads, Sir! all the year round. I am as great a one as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty, and truth, and all them sort of things; but as to this, (no offence, I hope, Sir!) I must beg to be excused.

'So ended my first canvass: from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester, to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and having perused it,

measured me from head to foot, and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing. I presented my prospectus to him; he rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and *significantly* rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and lastly, putting it into his pocket, turned his back on me with an "*overrun* with these articles!' and so without another syllable retired into his counting-house—and, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

'This, I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner, he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other illuminati of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my lifetime; and then it was herb tobacco, mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow colour, (not forgetting the lamentable difficulty I have always experienced in saying, No! and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing), I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bole with salt. I was soon, however, compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which, as I had drank but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement; but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again; and I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing-room, and opened a small packet of letters which he had received from Bristol for me, ere I sunk back on the sofa, in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, *deathly* pale, and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while, one after another, there dropt in the different gentlemen, who had been invited to meet and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked around on the party; my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment, one of the gentlemen began the conversation with "*Have you seen a paper to-day, Mr. Coleridge?*"—

"Sir! (I replied, rubbing my eyes), I am far from convinced, that a Christian is permitted [1] to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest." This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather incongruous with, the purpose for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced an involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom, indeed, have I passed so many delightful hours as I enjoyed in that room, from the moment of that laugh to an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party, have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information, and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards, they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me, with the most friendly, and yet most flattering expressions, that the employment was neither fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet if I had determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and (that failing) the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, indeed at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall, with affectionate pleasure, the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me, how opposite, even then, my principles were to those of Jacobinism, or even of Democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the 10th and 11th Numbers of *The Friend*.' p. 174.

We shall not stop at present to dispute with Mr. Coleridge, how far the principles of the Watchman, and the *Conciones ad Populum* were or were not akin to those of the Jacobins. His style, in general, admits of a convenient latitude of interpretation. But we think we are quite safe in asserting, that they were still more opposite to those of the Anti-Jacobins, and the party to which he admits he has gone over.

[1] With all proper allowances for the effects of the Mundungus, we must say that this answer appears to us very curiously characteristic of the exaggerated and canting tone of this poet and his associates. A man may or may not think time misemployed in reading newspapers:—but we believe no man, out of the Pantisocratic or Lake school, ever dreamed of denouncing it as unchristian and impious—even if he had not himself begun and ended his career as an Editor of newspapers. The same absurd exaggeration is visible in his magnificent eulogium on the conversational talents of his Birmingham Unitarians.

Our author next gives a somewhat extraordinary account of his having been set upon with his friend Wordsworth, by a Government spy, in his retreat at Nether-Stowey—the most lively thing in which is, that the said spy, who, it seems had a great red nose, and had overheard the friends discoursing about *Spinosa*, reported to his employers, that he could make out very little of what they said,—only he was sure they were aware of his vicinity, as he heard them very often talking of *Spy-nosy*! If this is not the very highest vein of wit in the world, it must be admitted at least to be very innocent merriment. Another excellent joke of the same character is his remark on an Earl of Cork not paying for his copy of the *Friend*—that he might have been an Earl of *Bottle* for him!—We have then some memorandums of his excursion into Germany, and the conditions on which he agreed, on his return home in 1800, to write for the Morning Post, which was at that time not a very ministerial paper, if we remember right.

A propos of the Morning Post, Mr. C. takes occasion to eulogise the writings of Mr. Burke, and observes, that 'as our very sign-boards give evidence that there has been a Titian in the world, so the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of Edmund Burke.' This is modest and natural we suppose for a newspaper editor: But our learned author is desirous of carrying the parallel a little further,—and assures us, that nobody can doubt of Mr. Burke's consistency. 'Let the scholar,' says our biographer, 'who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke at the commencement of the American war, and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French Revolution. He will find the principles exactly the same, and the deductions the same—but the practical inferences almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other, yet in both equally legitimate and confirmed by the results.'

It is not without reluctance that we speak of the vices and infirmities of such a mind as Burke's: But the poison of high example has by far the widest range of destruction; and, for the sake of public honour and individual integrity, we think it right to say, that however it may be defended upon other grounds, the political career of that eminent individual has no title to the praise of consistency. Mr. Burke, the opponent of the American war—and Mr. Burke, the opponent of the French Revolution, are not the same person, but opposite persons—not opposite persons only, but deadly enemies. In the latter period, he abandoned not only all his practical conclusions, but all the principles on which they were founded. He proscribed all his former sentiments, denounced all his former friends, rejected

and reviled all the maxims to which he had formerly appealed as incontestable. In the American war, he constantly spoke of the rights of the people as inherent, and inalienable: After the French Revolution, he began by treating them with the chicanery of a sophist, and ended by raving at them with the fury of a maniac. In the former case, he held out the duty of resistance to oppression, as the palladium, and only ultimate resource, of natural liberty; in the latter, he scouted, prejudged, vilified and nicknamed, all resistance in the abstract, as a foul and unnatural union of rebellion and sacrilege. In the one case, to answer the purposes of faction, he made it out, that the people are always in the right; in the other, to answer different ends, he made it out that they are always in the wrong—lunatics in the hands of their royal keepers, patients in the sick-wards of an hospital, or felons in the condemned cells of a prison. In the one, he considered that there was a constant tendency on the part of the prerogative to encroach on the rights of the people, which ought always to be the object of the most watchful jealousy, and of resistance, when necessary: In the other, he pretended to regard it as the sole occupation and ruling passion of those in power, to watch over the liberties and happiness of their subjects. The burthen of all his speeches on the American war was conciliation, concession, timely reform, as the only practicable or desirable alternative of rebellion: The object of all his writings on the French Revolution was, to deprecate and explode all concession and all reform, as encouraging rebellion, and an irretrievable step to revolution and anarchy. In the one, he insulted kings personally, as among the lowest and worst of mankind; in the other, he held them up to the imagination of his readers as sacred abstractions. In the one case, he was a partisan of the people, to court popularity; in the other, to gain the favour of the Court, he became the apologist of all courtly abuses. In the one case, he took part with those who were actually rebels against his Sovereign; in the other, he denounced, as rebels and traitors, all those of his own countrymen who did not yield sympathetic allegiance to a foreign Sovereign, whom we had always been in the habit of treating as an arbitrary tyrant.

Judging from plain facts and principles, then, it is difficult to conceive more ample proofs of inconsistency. But try it by the more vulgar and palpable test of comparison. Even Mr. Fox's enemies, we think, allow *him* the praise of consistency. *He* asserted the rights of the people in the American war, and continued to assert them in the French Revolution. He remained visibly in his place; and spoke, throughout, the same principles in the same language. When Mr. Burke abjured these principles, he left this associate; nor did it

ever enter into the mind of a human being to impute the defection to any change in Mr. Fox's sentiments—any desertion by him of the maxims by which his public life had been guided. Take another illustration, from an opposite quarter. Nobody will accuse the principles of his present Majesty, or the general measures of his reign, of inconsistency. If they had no other merit, they have at least that of having been all along actuated by one uniform and constant spirit: Yet Mr. Burke at one time vehemently opposed, and afterwards most intemperately extolled them; and it was for his recanting his opposition, not for his persevering in it, that he received his pension. He does not himself mention his flaming speeches in the American war, as among the public services which had entitled him to this remuneration.

The truth is, that Burke was a man of fine fancy and subtle reflection; but not of sound and practical judgment—nor of high or rigid principles.—As to his understanding, he certainly was not a great philosopher; for his works of mere abstract reasoning are shallow and inefficient:—Nor a man of sense and business; for, both in counsel and in conduct, he alarmed his friends as much at least as his opponents:—But he was a keen and accomplished pamphleteer—an ingenious political essayist. He applied the habit of reflection, which he had borrowed from his metaphysical studies, but which was not competent to the discovery of any elementary truth in that department, with great felicity and success, to the mixed mass of human affairs. He knew more of the political machine than a recluse philosopher; and he speculated more profoundly on its principles and general results than a mere politician. He saw a number of fine distinctions and changeable aspects of things, the good mixed with the ill, the ill mixed with the good; and with a sceptical indifference, in which the exercise of his own ingenuity was always the governing principle, suggested various topics to qualify or assist the judgment of others. But for this very reason he was little calculated to become a leader or a partisan in any important practical measure: For the habit of his mind would lead him to find out a reason for or against any thing: And it is not on speculative refinements, (which belong to *every* side of a question), but on a just estimate of the aggregate mass and extended combinations of objections and advantages, that we ought to decide and act. Burke had the power, almost without limit, of throwing true or false weights into the scales of political casuistry, but not firmness of mind—or, shall we say, honesty enough—to hold the balance. When he took a side, his vanity or his spleen more frequently gave the casting vote than his judgment; and the fieriness of his zeal was in exact pro-

portion to the levity of his understanding, and the want of conscious sincerity.

He was fitted by nature and habit for the studies and labours of the closet; and was generally mischievous when he came out;—because the very subtlety of his reasoning, which, left to itself, would have counteracted its own activity, or found its level in the common sense of mankind, became a dangerous engine in the hands of power, which is always eager to make use of the most plausible pretexts to cover the most fatal designs. That which, if applied as a general observation on human affairs, is a valuable truth suggested to the mind, may, when forced into the interested defence of a particular measure or system, become the grossest and basest sophistry. Facts or consequences never stood in the way of this speculative politician. He fitted them to his preconceived theories, instead of conforming his theories to them. They were the playthings of his style, the sport of his fancy. They were the straws of which his imagination made a blaze, and were consumed, like straws, in the blaze they had served to kindle. The fine things he said about Liberty and Humanity, in his speech on the Begum's affairs, told equally well, whether Warren Hastings was a tyrant or not: Nor did he care one jot who caused the famine he described, so that he described it in a way to attract admiration. On the same principle, he represents the French priests and nobles under the old regime as excellent moral people, very charitable, and very religious, in the teeth of notorious facts,—to answer to the handsome things he has to say in favour of priesthood and nobility in general; and, with similar views, he falsifies the records of our English Revolution, and puts an interpretation on the word *abdication*, of which a schoolboy would be ashamed. He constructed his whole theory of government, in short, not on rational, but on picturesque and fanciful principles; as if the King's crown were a painted gewgaw, to be looked at on gala-days; titles an empty sound to please the ear; and the whole order of society a theatrical procession. His lamentation over the age of chivalry, and his projected crusade to restore it, is about as wise as if any one, from reading the Beggar's Opera, should take to picking of pockets; or, from admiring the landscapes of Salvator Rosa, should wish to convert the abodes of civilized life into the haunts of wild beasts and banditti. On this principle of false refinement, there is no abuse, nor system of abuses, that does not admit of an easy and triumphant defence; for there is something which a merely speculative inquirer may always find out, good as well as bad, in every possible system, the best or the worst; and if we can once get rid of the restraints of common sense and honesty, we may easily prove, by plausible words, that liberty and

slavery, peace and war, plenty and famine, are matters of perfect indifference. This is the school of politics, of which Mr. Burke was at the head; and it is perhaps to his example, in this respect, that we owe the prevailing tone of many of those newspaper paragraphs, which Mr. Coleridge thinks so invaluable an accession to our political philosophy.

Burke's literary talents, were, after all, his chief excellence. His style has all the familiarity of conversation, and all the research of the most elaborate composition. He says what he wants to say, by any means, nearer or more remote, within his reach. He makes use of the most common or scientific terms, of the longest or shortest sentences, of the plainest and most downright, or of the most figurative modes of speech. He gives for the most part loose reins to his imagination, and follows it as far as the language will carry him. As long as the one or the other has any resources in store to make the reader feel and see the thing as he has conceived it,—in its nicest shade of difference, in its utmost degree of force and splendour,—he never disdains, and never fails to employ them. Yet, in the extremes of his mixed style there is not much affectation, and but little either of pedantry or of coarseness. He everywhere gives the image he wishes to give, in its true and appropriate colouring: and it is the very crowd and variety of these images that have given to his language its peculiar tone of animation, and even of passion. It is his impatience to transfer his conceptions entire, living, in all their rapidity, strength, and glancing variety—to the minds of others, that constantly pushes him to the verge of extravagance, and yet supports him there in dignified security—

> 'Never so sure our rapture to create,
> As when he treads the brink of all we hate.'

He is, with the exception of Jeremy Taylor, the most poetical of prose writers, and at the same time his prose never degenerates into the mere glitter or tinkling of poetry; for he always aims at overpowering rather than at pleasing; and consequently sacrifices beauty and grandeur to force and vividness. He has invariably a task to perform, a positive purpose to execute, an effect to produce. His only object is therefore to strike hard, and in the right place; if he misses his mark, he repeats his blow; and does not care how ungraceful the action, or how clumsy the instrument, provided it brings down his antagonist.

Mr. C. enters next into a copious discussion of the merits of his friend Mr. Wordsworth's poetry,—which we do not think very remarkable either for clearness or candour; but as a very great part

of it is occupied with specific inculpations of our former remarks on that ingenious author, it would savour too much of mere controversy and recrimination, if we were to indulge ourselves with any observations on the subject. Where we are parties to any dispute, and consequently to be regarded as incapable of giving an *impartial* account of our adversary's argument, we shall not pretend to give any account of it at all; and therefore, though we shall endeavour to give all due weight to Mr. C.'s reasonings, when we have occasion to consider any new publication from the Lake school, we must for the present decline any notice of the particular objections he has here urged to our former judgments on their productions; and shall pass over all this part of the work before us, by merely remarking, that with regard to Mr. Wordsworth's ingenious project of confining the language of poetry to that which is chiefly in use among the lower orders of society, and that, from horror or contempt for the abuses of what has been called poetic diction, it is really unnecessary to say anything—the truth and common sense of the thing being so obvious, and, we apprehend, so generally acknowledged, that nothing but a pitiful affectation of singularity could have raised a controversy on the subject. There is, no doubt, a simple and familiar language, common to almost all ranks, and intelligible through many ages, which is the best fitted for the direct expression of strong sense and deep passion, and which, consequently, is the language of the best poetry as well as of the best prose. But it is not the exclusive language of poetry. There is another language peculiar to this manner of writing, which has been called *poetic diction*,—those flowers of speech, which, whether natural or artificial, fresh or faded, are strewed over the plainer ground which poetry has in common with prose: a paste of rich and honeyed words, like the candied coat of the auricula; a glittering tissue of quaint conceits and sparkling metaphors, crusting over the rough stalk of homely thoughts. Such is the style of almost all our modern poets; such is the style of Pope and Gray; such, too, very often, is that of Shakespeare and Milton; and, notwithstanding Mr. Coleridge's decision to the contrary, of Spenser's Faery Queen. Now this style is the reverse of one made up of *slang* phrases; for, as they are words associated only with mean and vulgar ideas, poetic diction is such as is connected only with the most pleasing and elegant associations; and *both* differ essentially from the middle or natural style, which is a mere transparent medium of the thoughts, neither degrading nor setting them off by any adventitious qualities of its own, but leaving them to make their own impression, by the force of truth and nature. Upon the whole, therefore, we should think this

ornamented and coloured style, most proper to descriptive or fanciful poetry, where the writer has to lend a borrowed, and, in some sort, meretricious lustre to outward objects, which he can best do by enshrining them in a language that, by custom and long prescription, reflects the image of a poetical mind,—as we think the common or natural style is the truly dramatic style, that in which he can best give the impassioned, unborrowed, unaffected thoughts of others. The pleasure derived from poetic diction is the same as that derived from classical diction. It is in like manner made up of words dipped in 'the dew of Castalie,'—tinged with colours borrowed from the rainbow,—'sky-tinctured,' warmed with the glow of genius, purified by the breath of time,—that soften into distance, and expand into magnitude, whatever is seen through their medium,—that varnish over the trite and commonplace, and lend a gorgeous robe to the forms of fancy, but are only an incumbrance and a disguise in conveying the true touches of nature, the intense strokes of passion. The beauty of poetic diction is, in short, borrowed and artificial. It is a glittering veil spread over the forms of things and the feelings of the heart; and is best laid aside, when we wish to show either the one or the other in their naked beauty or deformity. As the dialogues in Othello and Lear furnish the most striking instances of plain, point-blank speaking, or of the real language of nature and passion, so the Choruses in Samson Agonistes abound in the fullest and finest adaptations of classic and poetic phrases to express distant and elevated notions, born of fancy, religion and learning.

Mr. Coleridge bewilders himself sadly in endeavouring to determine in what the essence of poetry consists;—Milton, we think, has told it in a single line—

> ——'Thoughts that voluntary move
> Harmonious numbers.'

Poetry is the music of language, expressing the music of the mind. Whenever any object takes such a hold on the mind as to make us dwell upon it, and brood over it, melting the heart in love, or kindling it to a sentiment of admiration;—whenever a movement of imagination or passion is impressed on the mind, by which it seeks to prolong and repeat the emotion, to bring all other objects into accord with it, and to give the same movement of harmony, sustained and continuous, to the sounds that express it,—this is poetry. The musical in sound is the sustained and continuous; the musical in thought and feeling is the sustained and continuous also. Whenever articulation passes naturally into intonation, this is the beginning of poetry. There is no natural harmony in the ordinary combinations

of significant sounds: the language of prose is not the language of music, or of *passion*: and it is to supply this inherent defect in the mechanism of language—to make the sound an echo to the sense, when the sense becomes a sort of echo to itself—to mingle the tide of verse, 'the golden cadences of poesy,' with the tide of feeling, flowing, and murmuring as it flows—or to take the imagination off its feet, and spread its wings where it may indulge its own impulses, without being stopped or perplexed by the ordinary abruptnesses, or discordant flats and sharps of prose—that poetry was invented.

As Mr. C. has suppressed his Disquisition on the Imagination as unintelligible, we do not think it fair to make any remarks on the 200 pages of prefatory matter, which were printed, it seems, in the present work, before a candid friend apprised him of this little objection to the appearance of the Disquisition itself. We may venture, however, on one observation, of a very plain and practical nature, which is forced upon us by the whole tenor of the extraordinary history before us.—Reason and imagination are both excellent things; but perhaps their provinces ought to be kept more distinct than they have lately been. 'Poets have such seething brains,' that they are disposed to meddle with everything, and mar all. Mr. C., with great talents, has, by an ambition to be everything, become nothing. His metaphysics have been a dead weight on the wings of his imagination—while his imagination has run away with his reason and common sense. He might, we seriously think, have been a very considerable poet—instead of which he has chosen to be a bad philosopher and a worse politician. There is something, we suspect, in these studies that does not easily amalgamate. We would not, with Plato, absolutely banish poets from the commonwealth; but we really think they should meddle as little with its practical administration as may be. They live in an ideal world of their own; and it would be, perhaps, as well if they were confined to it. Their flights and fancies are delightful to themselves and to every body else; but they make strange work with matter of fact; and, if they were allowed to act in public affairs, would soon turn the world upside down. They indulge only their own flattering dreams or superstitious prejudices, and make idols or bugbears of what they please, caring as little for 'history or particular facts,' as for general reasoning. They are dangerous leaders and treacherous followers. Their inordinate vanity runs them into all sorts of extravagances; and their habitual effeminacy gets them out of them at any price. Always pampering their own appetite for excitement, and wishing to astonish others, their whole aim is to produce a dramatic effect, one way or other—to shock or delight their

observers; and they are as perfectly indifferent to the consequences of what they write, as if the world were merely a stage for them to play their fantastic tricks on.—As romantic in their servility as in their independence, and equally importunate candidates for fame or infamy, they require only to be distinguished, and are not scrupulous as to the means of distinction. Jacobins or Antijacobins —outrageous advocates for anarchy and licentiousness, or flaming apostles of persecution—always violent and vulgar in their opinions, they oscillate, with a giddy and sickening motion, from one absurdity to another, and expiate the follies of their youth by the heartless vices of their advancing age. None so ready as they to carry every paradox to its most revolting and nonsensical excess—none so sure to caricature, in their own persons, every feature of an audacious and insane philosophy:—In their days of innovation, indeed, the philosophers crept at their heels like hounds, while they darted on their distant quarry like hawks; stooping always to the lowest game; eagerly snuffing up the most tainted and rankest scents; feeding their vanity with the notion of the strength of their digestion of poisons, and most ostentatiously avowing whatever would most effectually startle the prejudices of others. Preposterously seeking for the stimulus of novelty in truth, and the eclat of theatrical exhibition in pure reason, it is no wonder that these persons at last became disgusted with their own pursuits, and that, in consequence of the violence of the change, the most inveterate prejudices and uncharitable sentiments have rushed in to fill up the *vacuum* produced by the previous annihilation of common sense, wisdom, and humanity.

This is the true history of our reformed Antijacobin poets; the life of one of whom is here recorded. The cant of Morality, like the cant of Methodism, comes in most naturally to close the scene: and as the regenerated sinner keeps alive his old raptures and new-acquired horrors, by anticipating endless ecstasies or endless tortures in another world; so, our disappointed demagogue keeps up that 'pleasurable poetic fervour' which has been the cordial and the bane of his existence, by indulging his maudlin egotism and his mawkish spleen in fulsome eulogies of his own virtues, and nauseous abuse of his contemporaries[1]—in making excuses for doing nothing himself, and assigning bad motives for what others have done.—Till he can do something better, we would rather hear no more of him.

[1] See his criticisms on Bertram, vol. II., reprinted from the Courier.

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE

Vol. xxxi.] [*December* 1818.

Horace Walpole was by no means a venerable or lofty character:—But he has here left us another volume of gay and graceful letters, which, though they indicate no peculiar originality of mind, or depth of thought, and are continually at variance with good taste and right feeling, still give a lively and amusing view of the time in which he lived. He was indeed a garrulous *old* man nearly all his days; and, luckily for his gossiping propensities, he was on familiar terms with the gay world, and set down as a man of genius by the Princess Amelia, George Selwyn, Mr. Chute, and all persons of the like talents and importance. His descriptions of court dresses, court revels, and court beauties, are in the highest style of perfection,—sprightly, fantastic and elegant: And the zeal with which he hunts after an old portrait or a piece of broken glass, is ten times more entertaining than if it were lavished on a worthier object. He is indeed the very prince of Gossips,—and it is impossible to question his supremacy, when he floats us along in a stream of bright talk, or shoots with us the rapids of polite conversation. He delights in the small squabbles of great politicians and the puns of George Selwyn,—enjoys to madness the strife of loo with half a dozen bitter old women of quality,—revels in a world of chests, cabinets, commodes, tables, boxes, turrets, stands, old printing, and old china,—and indeed lets us loose at once amongst all the frippery and folly of the last two centuries, with an ease and a courtesy equally amazing and delightful. His mind, as well as his house, was piled up with Dresden china, and illuminated through painted glass; and we look upon his heart to have been little better than a case full of enamels, painted eggs, ambers, lapis-lazuli, cameos, vases and rock-crystals. This may in some degree account for his odd and quaint manner of thinking, and his utter poverty of feeling:—He could not get a plain thought out of that cabinet of curiosities, his mind;—and he had no room for feeling,—no place to plant it in, or leisure to cultivate it. He was at all times the slave of elegant trifles; and could no more screw himself up into a decided and solid personage, than he could divest himself of petty jealousies and miniature animosities. In one word, every thing about him was in little; and the smaller the object, and the less its importance, the higher did his estimation and his praises of it ascend. He piled up trifles to a colossal height—and made a pyramid of nothings 'most marvellous to see.'

His political character was a heap of confusion: but the key to it

is easy enough to find. He united an insufferable deal of aristocratical pretension with Whig professions,—and, under an assumed carelessness and liberality, he nourished a petty anxiety about court movements and a degree of rancour towards those who profited by them, which we should only look for in the most acknowledged sycophants of Government. He held out austere and barren principles, in short, to the admiration of the world,—but indemnified himself in practice by the indulgence of all the opposite ones. He wore his horse-hair shirt as an *outer* garment; and glimpses might always be caught of a silken garment within. He was truly 'of outward show elaborate; of inward less exact.' But, setting his political character—or rather the want of it—and some few private failings, and a good many other questionable peculiarities, aside,—we find Walpole an amusing companion, and should like to have such a chronicler of small matters every fifty or sixty years;—or it might be better, perhaps, if, like the aloe, they should blossom but once in a century. With what spirit does he speak of the gay and noble visitors at Strawberry Hill! How finely does he group, in his letters, the high-born and celebrated beauties of the court, with whom it was his fortune and his fancy to associate!

'Strawberry Hill is grown a perfect Paphos; it is the land of beauties. On Wednesday, the Dutchesses of Hamilton and Richmond, and Lady Ailesbury, dined there; the two latter staid all night. There never was so pretty a sight as to see them all sitting in the shell. A thousand years hence, when I begin to grow old, if that can ever be, I shall talk of that event, and tell young people how much handsomer the women of my time were than they will be. Then I shall say, "Women alter now: I remember Lady Ailesbury looking handsomer than her daughter the pretty Dutchess of Richmond, as they were sitting in the shell on my terrace, with the Dutchess of Richmond, one of the famous Gunnings," &c. &c. Yesterday, t'other famous Gunning dined there. She has made a friendship with my charming niece, to disguise her jealousy of the new Countess's beauty: there were they two, their Lords, Lord Buckingham, and Charlotte. You will think that I did not choose men for my parties so well as women. I don't include Lord Waldegrave in this bad election.'

All the rest is in the same style: and lords and ladies are shuffled about the whole work as freely as court cards in a party at Loo. Horace Walpole, to be sure, is always Pam: but this only makes the interest greater, and the garrulity more splendid. He is equally sprightly and facetious, whether he describes a King's death and funeral, or a quirk of George Selwyn; and is nearly as amusing when

he recounts the follies and the fashions of the day, as when he affects to be patriotic, or solemnizes into the sentimental. His style is not a bit less airy when he deals with 'the horrid story of Lord Ferrers's murdering his steward,' than when it informs us that 'Miss Chudleigh has called for the council books of the subscription concert, and has struck off the name of Mrs. Naylor.' He is equally amusing whether he records the death of the brave Balmerino, or informs us that 'old Dunch is dead.'

The letters of eminent men make, to our taste, very choice and curious reading; and, except when their publication becomes a breach of honour or decorum, we are always rejoiced to meet with them in print. We should except, perhaps, the letters of celebrated warriors; which, for the most part, should only be published in the Gazette. But, setting these heroes aside, whose wits, Pope has informed us, 'are kept in ponderous vases,' letters are certainly the honestest records of great minds, that we can become acquainted with; and we like them the more, for letting us into the follies and treacheries of high life, the secrets of the gay and the learned world, and the mysteries of authorship. We are ushered, as it were, behind the scenes of life; and see gay ladies and learned men, the wise, the witty, and the ambitious, in all the nakedness, or undress at least, of their spirits. A poet, in his private letters, seldom thinks it necessary to keep up the farce of feeling; but casts off the trickery of sentiment, and glides into the unaffected wit, or sobers quietly into the honest man. By his published works, we know that an author becomes a 'Sir John with all Europe;' and it can only be by his letters that we discover him to be 'Jack with his brothers and sisters, and John with his familiars.' This it is that makes the private letters of a literary person so generally entertaining. He is glad to escape from the austerity of composition, and the orthodoxy of thought; and feels a relief in easy speculations or ludicrous expressions. The finest, perhaps, in our language, are eminently of this description—we mean those of Gray to his friends or literary associates. His poetry is too scholastic and elaborate, and is too visibly the result of laborious and anxious study. But, in his letters, he at once becomes an easy, and graceful, and feeling writer. The composition of familiar letters just suited his indolence, his taste, and his humour. His remarks on poetry are nearly as good as poetry itself;—his observations on life are full of sagacity and fine understanding;—and his descriptions of natural scenery, or Gothic antiquities, are worth their weight in gold. Pope's letters, though extremely elegant, are failures as letters. He wrote them to the world, not to his friends; and they have therefore very much the air of universal secrets. Swift has recorded his own

sour mind in many a bitter epistle; and his correspondence remains a stern and brief chronicle of the time in which he lived. Cowper hath unwittingly beguiled us of many a long hour, by his letters to Lady Hesketh; and in them we see the fluctuations of his melancholy nature more plainly, than in all the biographical dissertations of his affectionate editor.——But we must not make catalogues,—nor indulge longer in this eulogy on letter-writing. We take a particular interest, we confess, in what is thus spoken aside, as it were, and without a consciousness of being overheard;—and think there is a spirit and freedom in the tone of works written for the post, which is scarcely ever to be found in those written for the press. We are much more edified by one letter of Cowper, than we should be by a week's confinement and hard labour in the metaphysical Bridewell of Mr. Coleridge; and a single letter from the pen of Gray, is worth all the pedlar-reasoning of Mr. Wordsworth's Eternal Recluse, from the hour he first squats himself down in the sun to the end of his preaching. In the first we have the light unstudied pleasantries of a wit, and a man of feeling;—in the last we are talked to death by an arrogant old proser, and buried in a heap of the most perilous stuff and the most dusty philosophy.

But to come back to the work before us.—Walpole evidently formed his style upon that of Gray, with whom he travelled; and, with his own fund of pleasantry and sarcasm, we know of no other writer whom he could so successfully have studied. There are some odd passages on Gray, scattered up and down the present volume, which speak more for the poet than for the justice or friendship of Walpole. In one letter he says,

'The first volume of Spencer is published with prints designed by Kent;—but the most execrable performance you ever beheld. The graving not worse than the drawing; awkward knights, scrambling Unas, hills tumbling down themselves, no variety of prospect, and three or four perpetual spruce firs.—Our charming Mr. Bentley is doing Mr. Gray as much more honour as he deserves than Spencer!'

This is indeed a lordly criticism. We really never saw so much bad taste condensed into so small a portion of prose. But he next shows us what ladies of the court think of men of letters, and how lords defend them.

'My Lady Ailesbury has been much diverted, and so will you too. Gray is in their neighbourhood. My Lady Carlisle says *he is extremely like me in his manner*. They went a party to dine on a cold loaf, and passed the day. Lady A. protests he never opened his lips but once, and then only said, "Yes, my Lady, I believe so."

'I agree with you most absolutely in your opinion about Gray; he

is the worst company in the world. From a melancholy turn, from living reclusely, and from a little too much dignity, he never converses easily. All his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences. His writings are admirable. He himself is not agreeable.'

But it is not only to his particular friends that he is thus amiably candid. Two other great names are dealt with in the same spirit in the following short sentence.

'Dr. Young has published a new book, on purpose, he says himself, to have an opportunity of telling a story that he has known these forty years. Mr. Addison sent for the young Lord Warwick, as he was dying, to show him in what peace a Christian could die. Unluckily he died of brandy. Nothing makes a Christian die in peace like being a maudlin! But don't say this in Gath, where you are.'

It is worthy of remark, indeed, that Walpole never speaks with respect of any man of genius or talent, and, least of all, of those master spirits who 'have got the start of this majestic world.' He envied all great minds; and shrunk from encountering them, lest his own should suffer by the comparison. He contrived indeed to quarrel with all his better-spirited friends. Even the gentleman to whom these epistles were addressed, a correspondent of three score years' standing, fell at last under his displeasure, and was dismissed his friendship. He turned out the domestics of the heart as easily as those of the house; with little or no notice, and with threats of giving them a bad character as a return for their past services. He wished to have genius to wait upon him; but was always surprised that it would not submit to be a servant of all work. Poor Bentley, of whom we hear praises 'high fantastical' in the early letters, meets with but scurvy treatment the moment he gets out of fashion with his half-patron and half-friend. He is all spirit, goodness and genius, till it falls to his turn to be disliked; and then the altered patron sneers at his domestic misfortunes, depreciates his talents, and even chuckles at the failure of a play which the artist's necessities required should be successful. The following is the ill-natured passage to which we allude.

'No, I shall never cease being a dupe, till I have been undeceived round by every thing that calls itself a virtue. I came to town yesterday, through clouds of dust, to see The Wishes, and went actually feeling for Mr. Bentley, and full of the emotions he must be suffering. What do you think, in a house crowded, was the first thing I saw? Mr. and Madame Bentley perched up in the front boxes, and acting audience at his own play! No, all the impudence

of false patriotism never came up to it. Did one ever hear of an author that had courage to see his own first night in public? I don't believe Fielding or Foote himself ever did; and this was the modest, bashful Mr. Bentley, that died at the thought of being known for an author even by his own acquaintance! In the stage-box was Lady Bute, Lord Halifax, and Lord Melcombe. I must say, the two last entertained the house as much as the play. Your King was prompter, and called out to the actors every minute to speak louder. The other went backwards and forwards behind the scenes, fetched the actors into the box, and was busier than Harlequin. The *curious* prologue was not spoken—the whole very ill acted. It turned out just what I remembered it: the good parts extremely good; the rest very flat and vulgar, &c.'

A poor painter of the name of Müntz is worse off even than Bentley; and is abused in a very ungenerous way for want of gratitude, and unmerciful extortion. There is a sad want of feeling and dignity in all this; but the key to it is, that Walpole was a miser. He loved the arts after a fashion; but his avarice pinched his affections. He would have had 'that which he esteemed the ornament of life,' but that he 'lived a coward in his own esteem.' The following haggling passage in one of his letters would disgrace a petty merchant in Duke's Place, in a bargain for the reversion of an old pair of trowsers.

'I am disposed to prefer the younger picture of Madame Grammont by Lely; but I stumbled at the price; twelve guineas for a copy in enamel is very dear. Mrs. Vesey tells me his originals cost sixteen, and are not so good as his copies. I will certainly have none of his originals. His, what is his name? I would fain resist this copy; I would more fain excuse myself for having it. I say to myself it would be rude not to have it, now Lady Kingsland and Mr. Montagu have had so much trouble. Well—*I think I must have it*, as my Lady Wishfort says, *why does not the fellow take me?* Do try if he will take ten;—remember it is the younger picture.'

Thus did he coquet with his own avarice. Of poor Mason, another of his dear friends, he speaks thus spitefully—

'Mr. Mason has published another drama, called Caractacus. There are some incantations poetical enough, and odes so Greek as to have very little meaning. But the whole is laboured, uninteresting, and no more resembling the manners of Britons than of Japanese. It is introduced by a piping elegy; for Mason, in imitation of Gray, *will cry and roar all night*, without the least provocation.'

Mason might have endured the paltriness of this remark, if he could

have seen the following pertinent remark on the Cymbeline of Shakespeare.

'You want news. I must make it if I send it. To change the dulness of the scene, I went to the play, where I had not been this winter. They are so crowded, that though I went before six, I got no better place than a fifth row, where I heard very ill, and was pent for five hours without a soul near me that I knew. It was Cymbeline; and appeared to me as long as if every body in it went really to Italy in every act, and back again. With a few pretty passages and a scene or two, it is so absurd and tiresome, that I am persuaded Garrick****'

This precious piece of criticism is cut short; whether from the sagacity of the editor or the prudence of the publishers, we cannot say. But it is much to be lamented. For it must have been very edifying to have seen Shakespeare thus pleasantly put down with a dash of the Honourable Mr. Walpole's pen—as if he had never written any thing better than the Mysterious Mother.

A conversation is here recorded between Hogarth and Walpole, which seems to us very curious and characteristic; though we cannot help smiling a little at the conclusion, where our author humanely refrains from erasing the line of praise which he had 'consecrated' to Hogarth;—as if the painter would infallibly have been damned into oblivion by that portentous erasure. But he is of the stuff that cannot die. With many defects, he was a person of great and original powers—a true and a terrific historian of the human heart: and his works will be remembered and *read*, as long as men and women retain their old habits, passions and vices. The following is the conversation of which we have spoken.

'*Hogarth.*—I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. *Walpole.* Not very soon, Mr. Hogarth.—*H.* I wish you would let me have it to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure; we painters must know more of those things than other people. *W.* Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? *H.* Oh! so far from it, there 's Reynolds who certainly has genius; why but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture that I would not hang in my cellars; and indeed to say truth, I have generally found that persons, who had studied painting least, were the best judges of it; but what I particularly wished to say to you was about Sir James Thornhill (you know he married Sir James's daughter); I would not have you say any thing against him: There was a book published some time ago, abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted history in England; and I assure you, some Germans have

said that he was a very great painter. *W.* My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred, and I really have not considered whether Sir J. Thornhill will come into my plan or not: If he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. *H.* I wish you would let me correct it; besides I am writing something of the same kind myself—I should be sorry we should clash. *W.* I believe it is not much known what my work is; very few persons have seen it. *H.* Why it is a critical history of painting is it not? *W.* No, it is an antiquarian history of it in England. I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS. and I believe the work will not give much offence; besides if it does I cannot help it: when I publish any thing I give it to the world to think as they please. *H.* Oh! if it is an antiquarian work we shall not clash; mine is a critical work; I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better. *W.* My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you; you now grow too wild—and I left him. If I had staid, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. I give you my honour this conversation is literal and, perhaps as long as you have known Englishmen and painters you never met with any thing so distracted. I had consecrated a line to his genius (I mean for wit) in my preface; I shall not erase it; but I hope no one will ask me if he is not mad.'

We do not think he was mad:—But the self-idolatry of fanciful persons often exhibits similar symptoms. A man of limited genius, accustomed to contemplate his own conceptions, has long settled his ideas as to every thing, and every other person existing in the world. He thinks nothing truly bright that does not reflect his own image back upon himself;—nothing truly beautiful, that is not made so by the lustre of his own feelings. He lives in a sort of chaste singleness; and holds every approach of a stronger power as dangerous to his solitary purity. He thinks nothing so important as his own thoughts —nothing so low, that his own fancy cannot elevate into greatness. He sees only 'himself and the universe;' and will 'admit no discourse to his beauty.' He is himself—alone! If such a man had had a voice in the management of the flood, he would have suffered no creeping thing to enter the ark but himself; and would have floated about the waters for forty days in lonely magnificence.

Passages of the kind, we have hitherto instanced, are very plentiful in all parts of the work; and we are glad they are so numerous,—because they will set Walpole's higher pretensions at rest with posterity. Time is a disinterested personage, and does his work on dull or rash men fairly and effectually. He knows nothing of

criticism but its austerity and its sarcasm. He cannot feel poetry; and has, therefore, no right to settle its laws, or imitate its language. His taste in painting was affected and dogmatical. His conduct to men of genius was a piece of insolence, which Posterity is bound to resent! The true heirs of fame are not to be disturbed in the enjoyment of their property, by every insolent pretender who steps in and affects a claim upon it. The world is called on 'to defend the right.'

To come, however, to the better side of our subject.—Walpole is, as we have said, an inimitable gossip,—a most vivacious garrulous historian of fair-haired women, and curious blue china. His garrulity, moreover, hath a genius of its own—and a transparent tea-cup lets in the light of inspiration upon it, and makes it shine with colours nigh divine. An inlaid commode is, with him, the mind's easy chair. We shall select a few passages from the letters before us, which, for pleasantry, ease and alertness, are by far the gayest *morceau* of description we have read of late. We may begin with a curious anecdote of Fielding, which is almost as interesting as any thing in the book. Thus it is—

'Take sentiments out of their pantoufles, and reduce them to the infirmities of mortality, what a falling off there is! I could not help laughing in myself t'other day, as I went through Holborn in a very hot day, at the dignity of human nature. All those foul old-clothes women panting without handkerchiefs, and mopping themselves all the way down within their loose jumps. Rigby gave me as strong a picture of nature. He and Peter Bathurst, t'other night, carried a servant of the latter's, who had attempted to shoot him, before Fielding; who, to all his other vocations, has, by the grace of Mr. Lyttleton, added that of Middlesex Justice. He sent them word that he was at supper; that they must come next morning. They did not understand that freedom, and ran up, where they found him banqueting with a blind man, a w——, and three Irishmen, on some cold mutton and a bone of ham, both in one dish, and the dirtiest cloth. He never stirred, nor asked them to sit. Rigby, who had seen him so often come to beg a guinea of Sir. C. Williams, and Bathurst, at whose father's he had lived for victuals, understood that dignity as little, and pulled themselves chairs,—on which he civilized.'

It is very certain that the writings of men are coloured by their indolence, their amusements, and their occupations; and this little peep into Fielding's private hours, lets us at once into his course of studies, and is an admirable illustration of his Tom Jones, Jonathan Wild, and other novels. We are taken into the artist's workshop, and shown the models from which he works; or rather, we break in

upon him at a time when he is copying from the *life*. It is a very idle piece of morality, to lament over Fielding for this low indulgence of his appetite for character. If he had been found quietly at his tea, he would never have left behind him the name he has done. There is nothing of a tea inspiration in any of his novels. They are assuredly the finest things of the kind in the language; and we are Englishmen enough to consider them the best in any language. They are indubitably the most English of all the works of Englishmen.

The descriptions of Lord Ferrers's fatal murder, and of Balmerino's death, are given with considerable spirit—(our author, indeed, is extremely *piquant* in matters of life and death); and we are puzzled which to select for our readers. They are both strongly illustrative of the times in which Walpole and the heroes of them lived; but we cannot afford room for them both; and we choose the letter on Lord Ferrers,—not because it is better written, or that the subject is more interesting, but because the book before us is open at that part, and because we would not idly meddle with so heroic a fall as that of the Lord Balmerino.

'The extraordinary history of Lord Ferrers is closed: He was executed yesterday. Madness, that in other countries is a disorder, is here a systematic character: It does not hinder people from forming a plan of conduct, and from even dying agreeably to it. You remember how the last Ratcliffe died with the utmost propriety; so did this horrid lunatic, coolly and sensibly. His own and his wife's relations had asserted that he would tremble at last. No such thing; he shamed heroes. He bore the solemnity of a pompous and tedious procession of above two hours, from the Tower to Tyburn, with as much tranquillity as if he was only going to his own burial, not to his own execution. He even talked of indifferent subjects in the passage; and if the sheriff and the chaplain had not thought that they had parts to act too, and had not consequently engaged him in most particular conversation, he did not seem to think it necessary to talk on the occasion. He went in his wedding-clothes; marking the only remaining impression on his mind. The ceremony he was in a hurry to have over. He was stopped at the gallows by a vast crowd; but got out of his coach as soon as he could, and was but seven minutes on the scaffold; which was hung with black, and prepared by the undertaker of his family at their expense. There was a new contrivance for sinking the stage under him, which did not play well; and he suffered a little by the delay, but was dead in four minutes. The mob was decent, and admired him, and almost pitied him; so they would Lord George, whose execution they are so angry at missing. I suppose every highwayman will now preserve the blue

handkerchief he has about his neck when he is married, that he may die like a lord. With all his madness, he was not mad enough to be struck with his aunt Huntingdon's sermons. The Methodists have nothing to brag of his conversion; though Whitfield prayed for him, and preached about him. Even Tyburn has been above their reach. I have not heard that Lady Fanny dabbled with his soul; but I believe she is prudent enough to confine her missionary zeal to subjects where the body may be her perquisite.'

The following is the account of Walpole's visit to Newsted Abbey, —the seat of the Byrons.

'As I returned, I saw Newsted and Althorpe; I like both. The former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouch'd, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on; It is a private chapel, quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned: The present lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks; five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense, he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy; and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dress'd in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals; the refectory, now the great drawing room, is full of Byrons; the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor.'

This is a careless, but happy description, of one of the noblest mansions in England; and it will *now* be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the seat of the Byrons, old, majestic, and venerable;—but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which Fame sheds over the habitations of Genius, and which now mantles every turret of Newsted Abbey. He saw it when Decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel, and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to go forth from those antique cloisters, that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, 'Sleep no more, to all the house.' Whatever may be its future fate, Newsted Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the court-yard and the chambers. It may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride or plebian opulence.—But it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish—and will go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals.

Our author is not often pathetic: But there are some touches of

this sort in the account of his visit to Houghton—though the first part is flippant enough.

'The surprise the picture gave me is again renewed. Accustomed for many years to see nothing but wretched daubs and varnished copies at auctions, I look at these as enchantment. My own description of them seems poor; but, shall I tell you truly, the majesty of Italian ideas almost sinks before the warm nature of Flemish colouring. Alas! don't I grow old? My young imagination was fired with Guido's ideas; must they be plump and prominent as Abishag to warm me now? Does great youth feel with poetic limbs, as well as see with poetic eyes? In one respect I am very young; I cannot satiate myself with looking: an incident contributed to make me feel this more strongly. A party arrived, just as I did, to see the house; a man, and three women in riding dresses, and they rode post through the apartments. I could not hurry before them fast enough; they were not so long in seeing for the first time, as I could have been in one room, to examine what I knew by heart. I remember formerly being often diverted with this kind of *seers*; they come—ask what such a room is called—in which Sir Robert lay—write it down—admire a lobster or a cabbage in a market piece—dispute whether the last room was green or purple—and then hurry to the inn for fear the fish should be over-dressed. How different my sensations! Not a picture here but recalls a history; not one but I remember in Downing-street or Chelsea, where queens and crowds admired them,—though seeing them as little as these travellers!'

There is some appearance of heart, too, in his account of Lady Waldegrave's sufferings on the death of her husband. She was a beautiful woman; and Walpole seems to have been really kind to her.

'I had not risen from table, when I received an express from Lady Betty Waldegrave, to tell me that a sudden change had happened; that they had given him James's powders, but that they feared it was too late; and that he probably would be dead before I could come to my niece, for whose sake she begged I would return immediately. I was indeed too late! Too late for every thing.—Late as it was given, the powder vomited him even in the agonies. Had I had power to direct, he should never have quitted James:—But these are vain regrets!—Vain to recollect how particularly kind he, who was kind to everybody, was to me! I found Lady Waldegrave at my brother's. She weeps without ceasing; and talks of his virtues and goodness to her in a manner that distracts one. My brother bears this mortification with more courage than I could have expected from his warm passions: but nothing struck me more than to see my rough savage Swiss, Louis, in tears as he opened my

chaise.—I have a bitter scene to come. To-morrow morning I carry poor Lady Waldegrave to Strawberry. Her fall is great, from that adoration and attention that he paid her,—from that splendour of fortune, so much of which dies with him,—and from that consideration which rebounded to her from the great deference which the world had for his character. Visions, perhaps. Yet who could expect that they would have passed away even before that fleeting thing, her beauty!'

This lady seems to have been afflicted nearly beyond the hope of consolation. Nevertheless, she married again. It is not a bad sign, we believe, when a widow sets in with a good wet grief: she has the better chance of a fine day. Philosophers assert, indeed, that it is possible for a woman to cry a sorrow clean out:—and we must confess, we have now and then heard of such things.

We must draw to a close now with our quotations—though we wish we had room for more. For the author is exceedingly amusing in his attempt at tracing his descent from Chaucer;—in his remarks on old and young kings,—in his practical and prospective speculations on gout in the feet and stomach,—and in his picture of himself, 'with sweet peas stuck in his hair!' We should have liked, too, to extract a *bon mot* or two of George Selwyn, whose love of puns and executions was equally insatiable; but they stick too fast in the looser texture of his historian, to be disengaged with any moderate labour. The following little passage is very pleasingly written.

'For what are we taking Belleisle?—I rejoiced at the little loss we had on landing: For the glory, I leave it to the Common Council. I am very willing to leave London to them too, and do pass half the week at Strawberry, where my two passions, lilacs and nightingales, are in full bloom. I spent Sunday as if it were Apollo's birth-day; Gray and Mason were with me, and we listened to the nightingales till one o'clock in the morning. Gray has translated two noble incantations from the Lord knows who, a Danish Gray, who lived the Lord knows when. They are to be enchased in a history of English Bards, which Mason and he are writing, but of which the former has not written a word yet, and of which the latter, if he rides Pegasus at his usual foot pace, will finish the first page two years hence!'

We cannot understand the Editor's drift in leaving so many names unprinted. The respect for the living has been carried, we think, to a most awful extent: for names are continually left blank, which would visit their sins, if at all, upon the third or fourth generation. In many instances, too, the allusions are as plain as if the names had been written at full length. At p. 185, for example, we perceive a delicate attention of this sort to the family of Northumberland,—

though few readers can be so respectfully uninformed as to be at all perplexed by the suppression. Chevy Chase has not left the Douglas and the Percy in such comfortable security. The mystical passage is as follows.

'Lady R—— P—— pushed her on the birth-night against a bench. The Dutchess of Grafton asked if it was true that Lady R—— kicked her? "Kick me, Madam! when did you ever hear of a P——y that took a kick?" I can tell you another anecdote of that house, that will not divert you less. Lord March making them a visit this summer at Alnwic Castle, my Lord received him at the gate and said, "I believe, my Lord, this is the first time that ever a Douglas and a P——y met here in friendship." Think of this from a Smithson to a true Douglas.'

The beauty of the thing too, is, that Smithson (which alone could give offence) is printed with all the letters—while Percy is delicately left in initials and finals.

There are some verses in the book, of which, out of regard to the author's memory, we shall say nothing. They are very apparently 'by a person of quality.' Pope, we think, has written something like them under that signature—which rather takes from their originality.——But we now take our final leave of this lively volume, with our usual protest against the enormous size into which this collection has been distended. Book-sellers now-a-days only study how to construct large paper houses for their little families of letter-press,—and never think of the taxation to which they thus subject their readers. These Letters might have been comfortably accommodated in a comely little octavo, and sold at a reasonable price: Instead of which, they are put forth in a good stiff quarto,—and are, to use old Marall's phrase, 'very chargeable.' We hope soon to see them in a more accessible shape.

LIFE OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

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This, with regard to its main object, must certainly be regarded as a superfluous publication. Forty years after the death of Sir Joshua, Mr. Farington has found himself called upon to put forth a thin octavo volume, to revive the recollection of the dispute between their late President and the Academy, and to correct an error into which Mr. Malone had fallen, in supposing that Sir Joshua was not entirely to blame in that business. This is a remarkable instance of the tenaciousness of corporate bodies with respect to the immaculate

purity of their conduct. It was at first suggested that printed notes might be sufficient, with references to the pages of Mr. Malone's account: but it was finally judged best to give it as a connected narrative—that the vindication of the Academy might slip in only as a parenthesis or an episode. So we have a full account of Sir Joshua's birth and parentage, god-fathers and god-mothers, with as many repetitions beside as were necessary to give a colouring to Mr. Farington's ultimate object. The manner in which the plot of the publication is insinuated, is curious and characteristic: But our business at present is with certain more general matters, on which we have some observations to offer.

'In the present instance,' says Mr. F., 'we see how a character, formed by early habits of consideration, self-government, and persevering industry, acquired the highest fame; and made his path through life a course of unruffled moral enjoyment. Sir Joshua Reynolds, when young, wrote rules of conduct for himself. One of his maxims was, "that the great principle of being happy in this world, is, not to mind or be affected with small things." To this rule he strictly adhered; and the constant habit of controlling his mind contributed greatly to that evenness of temper which enabled him to live pleasantly with persons of all descriptions. Placability of temper may be said to have been his characteristic. The happiness of possessing such a disposition was acknowledged by his friend Dr. Johnson, who said, "Reynolds was the most invulnerable man he had ever known."

'The life of this distinguished artist exhibits a useful lesson to all those who may devote themselves to the same pursuit. He was not of the class of such as have been held up, or who have esteemed themselves, to be heaven-born geniuses. He appeared to think little of such claims. It will be seen, in the account of his progress to the high situation he attained in his profession, that at no period was there in him any such fancied inspiration; on the contrary, every youthful reader of the Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds may feel assured, that his ultimate success will be in proportion to the resolution with which he follows his example.'

This, we believe, is the current morality and philosophy of the present day; and therefore it is of more consequence to observe, that it appears to us to be a mere tissue of sophistry and folly. And first, as to happiness depending on 'not being affected with small things,' it seems plain enough, that a continued flow of pleasurable sensations cannot depend every moment on great objects. Children are supposed to have a fair share of enjoyment; and yet this arises chiefly from their being delighted with trifles—'pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw.' The reason why we so seldom carry on the

happy vivacity of early youth into maturer age is, that we form to ourselves a higher standard of enjoyment than we can realize; and that our passions gradually fasten on certain favourite objects, which, in proportion to their magnitude, are of rare occurrence, and, for the most part, out of our reach. The example, too, which suggested these general remarks, actually exposes their fallacy. Sir Joshua did *not* owe his happiness to his contempt of little things, but to his success in great ones—and it was by that actual success, far more than by the meritorious industry and exertion which contributed to it, that he was enabled to disregard little vexations. Was Richardson, for example, who, it is observed afterwards, 'had merit in his profession, but not of a high order, though he thought so well on the subject of art, and had practised it so long,' to feel an equal moral enjoyment in the want of equal success? Was the idea of that excellence, which he had so long laboured in vain to realize, to console him for the loss of that 'highest fame,' which is here represented as the invariable concomitant of persevering industry? Or was he to disregard his failure as a trifle? Was the consciousness that he had done his best, to stand him in stead of that 'unruffled moral enjoyment' which Sir Joshua owed in no small degree to the coronet-coaches that besieged his doors, to the great names that sat at his table, to the beauty that crowded his painting-room, and reflected its loveliness back from the lucid mirror of his canvas? These things do indeed put a man above minding little inconveniences, and 'greatly contribute to that evenness of temper which enables him to live pleasantly with persons of all descriptions.' But was Hudson, Sir Joshua's master, who had grown old and rich in the cultivation of his art, and who found himself suddenly outdone and eclipsed by his pupil, to derive much *unruffled enjoyment* from this petty circumstance, or to comfort himself with one of those maxims which young Reynolds had written out for his conduct in life? When Sir Joshua himself lost the use of one of his eyes, in the decline of his life, he became peevish, and did not long survive the practice of his favourite art. Suppose the same loss to have happened to him in the meridian of his fame, we fear that all his consciousness of merit, and all his efforts of industry, would have been insufficient to have supplied that unruffled felicity which we are here taught to refer exclusively to these high sources.

The truth is, that those specious maxims, though they may seem at first sight to minister to content, and to encourage to meritorious exertion, lead in fact to a wrong estimate of human life, to unreasonable anticipations of success, and to bitter repinings and regrets at what in any reverse of fortune we think the injustice of society and

the caprice of nature. We have a very remarkable instance of this process of mental sophistication, or the setting up a theory against experience, and then wondering that human nature does not answer to our theory, in what our author says on this very subject of Hudson, and his more fortunate scholar afterwards. P. 46. 'It might be thought that the talents of Reynolds, to which no degree of ignorance or imbecility in the art could be insensible, added to his extraordinary reputation, would have extinguished every feeling of Jealousy or Rivalship in the mind of his master Hudson; but the malady was so deeply seated as to defy the usual remedies applied by time and reflection. *Hudson, when at the head of his art, admired and praised by all, had seen a youth rise up and annihilate both his Income and his Fame; and he never could divest his mind of the feelings of mortification caused by the loss he had thus sustained.*' This Mr. F. actually considers as something quite extraordinary and unreasonable; and which might have been easily prevented by a diligent study of Sir Joshua's admirable aphorisms, against being affected by small things. Such is our Academician's ethical simplicity, and enviable ignorance of the ways of the world!

One would think that the name of Hudson, which occurs frequently in these pages, might have taught our learned author some little distrust of that other favourite maxim, that Genius is the effect of education, encouragement, and practice. It is the basis, however, of his whole moral and intellectual system; and is thus distinctly announced and enforced in a very elaborate passage.

'With respect to his (Sir Joshua's) early indications of talent for the art he afterwards professed, it would be idle to dwell upon them as manifesting any thing more than is common among boys of his age. As an amusement he probably preferred drawing to any other to which he was tempted. In the specimens which have been preserved, there is no sign of premature ingenuity; his history is, in this respect, like what might be written of very many other artists, perhaps of artists in general. His attempts were applauded by kind and sanguine friends; and this encouraged him to persevere till it became a fixed desire in him to make further proficiency, and continually to request that it might be his profession. It is said, that his purpose was determined by reading Richardson's Treatise on Painting. Possibly it might have been so; his thoughts having been previously occupied with the subject. Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Cowley, writes as follows—"In the windows of his mother's apartment lay Spenser's Faery Queen, in which he very early took delight to read, till by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents which, sometimes

remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that peculiar designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called Genius. The true genius is a man of large general powers accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's Treatise." In this definition of genius, Reynolds fully concurred with Dr. Johnson; and he was himself an instance in proof of its truth. He had a sound natural capacity, and, by observation and long-continued labour, always discriminating with judgment, he obtained universal applause, and established his claim to be ranked amongst those to whom the highest praise is due; for his productions exhibited perfect originality. No artist ever consulted the works of eminent predecessors more than Sir Joshua Reynolds. He drew from every possible source something which might improve his practice; and he resolved the whole of what he saw in nature, and found in art, into a union, which made his pictures a singular display of grace, truth, beauty and richness.'

From the time that Mr. Locke exploded *innate ideas* in the commencement of the last century, there began to be a confused apprehension in some speculative heads, that there could be no innate faculties either; and our half metaphysicians have been floundering about in this notion ever since: as if, because there are no innate ideas, that is, no actual impressions existing in the mind without objects, there could be no peculiar capacity to receive them from objects; or as if there might not be as great a difference in the capacity itself as in the outward objects to be impressed upon it. We might as well deny, at once, that there are organs or faculties to receive impressions, because there are no innate ideas, as deny that there is an inherent difference in the organs or faculties to receive impressions of any particular kind. If the capacity exists (which it must do), there may, nay we should say there *must*, be a difference in it, in different persons, and with respect to different things. To allege that there is such a difference, no more implies the doctrine of innate ideas, than to say that the brain of a man is more fitted to discern external objects than a block of marble, imports that there are innate ideas in the brain, or in the block of marble. The impression, it is true, does not exist in the sealing-wax till the seal has been applied to it: but there was the previous capacity to receive the impression; and there may be, and most probably is, a greater degree of fitness in one piece of sealing-wax than in another. That the original capacity, the aptitude for certain impressions or pursuits, should be necessarily the same in different instances, with the

diversity that we see in men's organs, faculties, and acquirements of various kinds, is a supposition not only gratuitous, but absurd. There is the capacity of animals, the capacity of idiots, and of half idiots and half madmen of various descriptions: there is capacity, in short, of all sorts and degrees, from an oyster to a Newton: Yet we are gravely told, that wherever there is a power of sensation, the genius must be the same, and would, with proper cultivation, produce the same effects. 'No,' say the French materialists; 'but in minds commonly well organized (*communement bien organisés*), the results will, in the same given circumstances, be the same.' That is, in the same circumstances, and with the same *average* capacity, there will be the same average degree of genius or imbecility—which is just an identical proposition.

To make any sense at all of the doctrine, that circumstances are everything and natural genius nothing, the result ought at least to correspond to the aggregate of impressions, determining the mind this way or that, like so many weights in a scale. But the advocates of this doctrine allow that the result is not by any means according to the known aggregate of impressions, but, on the contrary, that one of the most insignificant, or one not at all perceived, will turn the scale against the bias and experience of a man's whole life. The reasoning is here lame again. These persons wish to get rid of occult causes, to refer every thing to distinct principles and a visible origin; and yet they say that they know not how it is, that, in spite of all visible circumstances, such a one should be an incorrigible blockhead and such an other an extraordinary genius; but that, no doubt, there was a secret influence exerted, a by-play in it, in which nature had no hand, but accident gave a nod, and in a lucky or unlucky minute fixed the destiny of both for life, by some slight and transient impulse! Now, this is like the reasoning of the astrologers, who pretend that your whole history is to be traced to the constellation under which you were born: and when you object that two men born at the same time have the most different character and fortune, they answer, that there was *an imperceptible interval* between the moment of their births, that made the whole difference. But if this short interval, of which no one could be aware, made the whole difference, it also makes their whole science vain. Besides, the notion of an accidental impulse, a slight turn of the screws giving a total revulsion to the whole frame of the mind, is only intelligible on the supposition of an original or previous bias which falls in with that impression, and catches at the long-wished for opportunity of disclosing itself:—like combustible matter meeting with the spark that kindles it into a flame. But it is little less than sheer nonsense to maintain, while outward impressions

are said to be every thing, and the mind alike indifferent to all, that one single unconscious impression shall decide upon a man's whole character, genius, and pursuits in life,—and all the rest thenceforward go for nothing.

Again, we hear it said that the difference of understanding or character is not very apparent at first:—though this is not uniformly true—but neither is the difference between an oak and a briar very great in the seed or in the shoot:—yet will any one deny that the germ is there, or that the soil, culture, the sun and heat alone produce the difference? So circumstances are necessary to the mind: but the mind is necessary to circumstances. The ultimate success depends on the joint action of both. They were fools who believed in innate ideas, or talked of 'heaven-born genius' without any means of developing it. They are greater, because more learned fools, who assert that circumstances alone can create or develop genius, where none exists. We may distinguish a stature of the mind as well as of the body,—a mould, a form, to which it is predetermined irrevocably. It is true that exercise gives strength to the faculties both of mind and body; but it is not true that it is the only source of strength in either case. Exercise will make a weak man strong, but it will make a strong man stronger. A dwarf will never be a match for a giant, train him ever so. And are there not dwarfs as well as giants in intellect? Appearances are for it, and reason is not against it.

There are, beyond all dispute, persons who have a talent for particular things, which according to Dr. Johnson's definition of genius, proceeds from 'a greater general capacity accidentally determined to a particular direction.' But this, instead of solving, doubles the miracle of genius; for it leaves entire all the former objections to inherent talent, and supposes that one man 'of large general capacity' is all sorts of genius at once. This is like admitting that one man may be naturally stronger than another—but denying that he can be naturally stronger in the legs or the arms only; and, deserting the ground of original equality, would drive the theorist to maintain that the inequality which exists must always be universal, and not particular, although all the instances we actually meet with are particular only. Now surely we have no right to give any man credit for genius in more things than he has shown a particular genius in. In looking round us in the world, it is most certain that we find men of large general capacity and no particular talent, and others with the most exquisite turn for some particular thing, and no general talent. Would Dr. Johnson have made Reynolds or Goldsmith, Burke, by beginning early and continuing late? We should make strange havoc by this arbitrary transposition of genius and industry. Some persons

cannot for their lives understand the first proposition in Euclid. Would they ever make great mathematicians? Or does this incapacity preclude them from ever excelling in any other art or mystery? Swift was admitted by special grace to a Bachelor's Degree at Dublin College, which, however, did not prevent him from writing Gulliver's Travels: and Claude Lorraine was turned away by his master from the trade of a pastry-cook to which he was apprenticed, for sheer stupidity. People often fail most in what they set themselves most diligently about, and discover an unaccountable *knack* at something else, without any effort or even consciousness that they possess it. One great proof and beauty of works of true genius, is the ease, simplicity, and freedom from conscious effort which pervades them. Not only in different things is there this difference of skill and aptness displayed; but in the same thing, to which a man's attention is continually directed, how narrow is the sphere of human excellence, how distinct the line of pursuit which nature has marked out even for those whom she has most favoured! Thus in painting, Raphael excelled in drawing, Titian in colouring, Rembrandt in *chiaro scuro*. A small part of nature was revealed to each by a peculiar felicity of conformation; and they would have made sad work of it, if each had neglected his own advantages to go in search of those of others, on the principle that genius is a large general capacity, transferred, by will or accident, to some particular channel.

It may be said, that in all these cases it is habit, not nature, that produces the disqualification for different pursuits. But if the bias given to the mind, by a particular study, totally unfits it for others, is it probable that there is something in the nature of those studies which requires a particular bias and structure of the faculties to excel in them, from the very first? If genius were, as some pretend, the mere exercise of general power on a particular subject, without any difference of organs or subordinate faculties, a man would improve equally in every thing, and grow wise at all points. But if, besides mere general power, there is a constant exercise and sharpening of different organs and faculties required for any particular pursuit, then a natural susceptibility of those organs and faculties must greatly assist him in his progress. To argue otherwise, is to shut one's eyes to the whole mass of inductive evidence; and to run headlong into a dogmatical theory, depending wholly on presumption and conjecture. We would sooner go the whole length of the absurdities of craniology, than get into this flatting-machine of the original sameness and indiscriminate tendency of men's faculties and dispositions. A painter, of all men, should not give into any such notion. Does he pretend to see differences in faces, and will he allow none in minds? Or, does he

make the outline of the head the criterion of a corresponding difference of character, and yet reject all distinction in the original conformation of the soul? Has he never been struck with *family* likenesses? And is there not an inherent, indestructible, and inalienable character to be found in the individuals of such families answering to this physiognomical identity, even in remote branches, where there has been no communication when young, and where the situation, pursuits, education, and character of the individuals have been totally opposite? Again, do we not find persons with every external advantage, without any intellectual superiority; and the greatest prodigies emerge from the greatest obscurity? What made Shakespeare? Not his education as a link-boy or a deer-stealer! Have there not been thousands of mathematicians, educated like Sir Isaac Newton, who have risen to the rank of Senior Wranglers, and never been heard of afterwards? Did not Hogarth live in the same age with Hayman? Who will believe that Highmore could, by any exaggeration of circumstances, have been transformed into Michael Angelo? That Hudson was another Vandyke *incognito*; or that Reynolds would, as our author dreads, have learned to paint like his master, if he had staid to serve out his apprenticeship with him? The thing was impossible.—Hudson had every advantage, as far as Mr. Farington's mechanical theory goes (for he was brought up under Richardson), to enable him to break through the trammels of custom, and to raise the degenerate style of art in his day. Why did he not? He had not original force of mind either to inspire him with the conception, or to impel him to execute it. Why did Reynolds burst through the cloud that overhung the region of art, and shine out, like the glorious sun, upon his native land? Because he had the genius to do it. It was nature working in him, and forcing its way through all impediments of ignorance and fashion, till it found its native element in undoubted excellence and wide-spread fame. His eye was formed to drink in light, and to absorb the splendid effects of shadowy obscurity; and it gave out what it took in. He had a strong intrinsic perception of grace and expression; and he could not be satisfied with the stiff, formal, inanimate models he saw before him. There are indeed certain minds that seem formed as conductors to truth and beauty, as the hardest metals carry off the electric fluid, and round which all examples of excellence, whether in art or nature, play harmless and ineffectual. Reynolds was not one of these: but the instant he saw gorgeous truth in natural objects, or artificial models, his mind 'darted contagious fire.' It is said that he surpassed his servile predecessors by a more diligent study, and more careful imitation of nature. But how was he attracted to nature,

but by the sympathy of real taste and genius? He also copied the portraits of Gandy, an obscure but excellent artist of his native county. A blockhead would have copied his master, and despised Gandy: but Gandy's style of painting satisfied and stimulated his ambition, because he saw nature there. Hudson's made no impression on him, because it presented nothing of the kind. Why then did Reynolds perform what he did? From the force and bias of his genius. Why did he not do more? Because his natural bias did not urge him farther. As it is the property of genius to find its true level, so it cannot rise above it. He seized upon and naturalized the beauties of Rembrandt and Rubens, because they were connate to his own turn of mind. He did not at first instinctively admire, nor did he ever, with all his professions, make any approach to the high qualities of Raphael or Michael Angelo, because there was an obvious incompatibility between them. Sir Joshua did not, after all, found a school of his own in general art, because he had not strength of mind for it. But he introduced a better taste for art in this country, because he had great taste himself, and sufficient genius to transplant many of the excellences of others.

Mr. Farington takes the trouble to vindicate Sir Joshua's title to be the author of his own Discourses—though this is a subject on which we have never entertained a doubt; and conceive indeed that a doubt never could have arisen, but from estimating the talents required for painting too low in the scale of intellect, as something mechanical and fortuitous; and from making literature something exclusive and paramount to all other pursuits. Johnson and Burke were equally unlikely to have had a principal or considerable hand in the Discourses. They have none of the pomp, the vigour, or *mannerism* of the one, nor the boldness, originality, or extravagance of the other. They have all the internal evidence of being Sir Joshua's. They are subdued, mild, unaffected, thoughtful,—containing sensible observations on which he laid too little stress, and vague theories which he was not able to master. There is the same character of mind in what he wrote, as of eye in what he painted. His style is gentle, flowing, and bland: there is an inefficient outline, with a mellow, felicitous, and delightful filling-up. In both, the taste predominates over the genius: the manner over the matter! The real groundwork of Sir Joshua's Discourses is to be found in Richardson's Essays.

We proceed to Mr. F.'s account of the state of art in this country, a little more than half a century ago, which is no less accurate than it is deplorable. It may lead us to form a better estimate of the merits of Sir Joshua in rescuing it from this lowest point of degradation, and

perhaps assist our conjectures as to its future progress and its present state.

'It was the lot of Sir Joshua Reynolds to be destined to pursue the art of painting at a period when the extraordinary effort he made came with all the force and effect of novelty. He appeared at a time when the art was at its lowest ebb. What might be called an English school had never been formed. All that Englishmen had done was to copy, and endeavour to imitate, the works of eminent men, who were drawn to England from other countries by encouragement, which there was no inducement to bestow upon the inferior efforts of the natives of this island. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Frederigo Zucchero, an Italian, was much employed in England, as had been Hans Holbein, a native of Basle, in a former reign. Charles the First gave great employment to Rubens and Vandyke. They were succeeded by Sir Peter Lely, a native of Soest in Westphalia; and Sir Godfrey Kneller came from Lubec to be, for a while, Lely's competitor: and after his death, he may be said to have had the whole command of the art in England. He was succeeded by Richardson, the first English painter that stood at the head of portrait painting in this country. Richardson had merit in his profession, but not of a high order: and it was remarkable, that a man who thought so well on the subject of art, and more especially who practised so long, should not have been able to do more than is manifested in his works. He died in 1745, aged 80. Jervais, the friend of Pope, was his competitor, but very inferior to him. Sir James Thornhill, also, was contemporary with Richardson, and painted portraits; but his reputation was founded upon his historical and allegorical compositions. In St. Paul's cathedral, in the Hospital at Greenwich, and at Hampton Court, his principal works are to be seen. As Richardson in portraits, so Thornhill in history painting was the first native of this island, who stood preeminent in the line of art he pursued at the period of his practice. He died in 1732, aged 56.

'Horace Walpole, in his Anecdotes of Painting, observes, that "at the accession of George the First, the arts were sunk to the lowest state in Britain." This was not strictly true. Mr. Walpole, who published at a later time, should have dated the period of their utmost degradation to have been in the middle of the last century, when the names of Hudson and Hayman were predominant. It is true, Hogarth was then well known to the public; but he was less so as a painter than an engraver, *though many of his pictures representing subjects of humour and character are excellent;* and Hayman, as a history painter, could not be compared with Sir James Thornhill.

'Thomas Hudson was a native of Devonshire. His name will be preserved from his having been the artist to whom Sir Joshua Reynolds was committed for instruction. Hudson was the scholar of Richardson, and married his daughter; and after the death of his father-in-law, succeeded to the chief employment in portrait painting. He was in all respects much below his master in ability; but being esteemed the best artist of his time, commissions flowed in upon him; and his *business*, as it might truly be termed, was carried on like that of a manufactory. To his ordinary heads, draperies were added by painters who chiefly confined themselves to that line of practice. No time was lost by Hudson in the study of character, or in the search of variety in the position of his figures: a few formal attitudes served as models for all his subjects; and the *display* of arms and hands, being the more difficult parts, was managed with great economy, *by all the contrivances of concealment*.

'To this scene of imbecile performance, Joshua Reynolds was sent by his friends. He arrived in London on the 14th of October 1741, and on the 18th of that month he was introduced to his future preceptor. He was then aged seventeen years and three months. The terms of the agreement were, that provided Hudson approved him, he was to remain four years: but might be discharged at pleasure. He continued in this situation two years and a half, during which time he drew many heads upon paper; and in his attempts in painting, succeeded so well in a portrait of Hudson's cook, as to excite his master's jealousy. In this temper of mind, Hudson availed himself of a very trifling circumstance to dismiss him. Having one evening ordered Reynolds to take a picture to Van Haaken the drapery painter; but as the weather proved wet he postponed carrying it till next morning. At breakfast, Hudson demanded why he did not take the picture the evening before? Reynolds replied, that "he delayed it on account of the weather; but that the picture was delivered that morning before Van Haaken rose from bed." Hudson then said, "You have not obeyed my orders, and shall not stay in my house." On this peremptory declaration, Reynolds urged that he might be allowed time to write to his father, who might otherwise think he had committed some great crime. Hudson, though reproached by his own servant for this unreasonable and violent conduct, persisted in his determination: accordingly, Reynolds went that day from Hudson's house to an uncle who resided in the Temple, and from thence wrote to his father, who, after consulting his neighbour Lord Edgcumbe, directed him to come down to Devonshire.

'Thus did our great artist commence his professional career. Two remarks may be made upon this event. First by quitting Hudson at this early period, he avoided the danger of having his mind and his hand habituated to a mean practice of the art, which, when established, is most difficult to overcome. It has often been observed in the works of artists who thus began their practice, that though they rose to marked distinction, there have been but few who could wholly divest themselves of the bad effects of a long-continued exercise of the eye and the hand in copying ordinary works. In Hudson's school, this was fully manifested. Mortimer and Wright of Derby were his pupils. They were both men of superior talents; but in Portraits they never succeeded beyond what would be called mediocre performance. In this line their productions were tasteless and laboured: fortunately, however, they made choice of subjects more congenial with their minds. Mortimer, charmed with the wild spirit of Salvator Rosa, made the exploits of lawless banditti the chief subjects of his pencil; while Wright devoted himself to the study of objects viewed by artificial light, and to the beautiful effects of the moon upon landscape scenery: yet, even in these, though deserving of great praise, the effects of their early practice were but too apparent; their pictures being uniformly executed with what artists call a heavy hand.' p. 19.

This is a humiliating retrospect for the lovers of art, and of their country. In speculating upon its causes, we are half afraid to hint at the probable effects of Climate,—so much is it now the fashion to decry what was once so much overrated. Our theoretical opinions are directed far more frequently by a spirit of petulant contradiction than of fair inquiry. We detect errors in received systems, and then run into the contrary extreme, to show how wise we are. Thus one folly is driven out by another; and the history of philosophy is little more than an alternation of blind prejudices and shallow paradoxes. Thus climate was everything in the days of Montesquieu, and in our day it is nothing. Yet it was but one of many cooperating causes at first—and it continues to be one still. In all that relates to the senses, physical causes may be allowed to operate very materially, without much violence to experience or probability. 'Are the *English* a Musical people?' is a question that has been debated at great length, and in all the forms. But whether the *Italians* are a musical people, is a question not to be asked, any more than whether they have a taste for the fine arts in general. Nor does the subject ever admit of a question, where a faculty or genius for any particular thing exists in the most eminent degree; for then it is sure to show itself, and force its way to the light, in spite of all obstacles. That

which no one ever denied to any people, we may be sure they actually possess: that which is as often denied as allowed them, we may be sure they do not possess in a very eminent degree. That, to which we make the angriest claim, and dispute the most about, whatever else may be, is not our *forte*. The French are allowed by all the world to be a dancing, talking, cooking people. If the English were to set up the same pretensions, it would be ridiculous. But then, they say, they have other excellences; and having these, they would have the former too. They think it hard to be set down as a dull, plodding people: but is it not equally hard upon others to be called vain and light? They tell us, they are the wisest, the freest, and most moral people on the face of the earth, without the frivolous accomplishments of their neighbours; but they insist upon having these too, to be upon a par in every thing with the rest of the world. We have our bards and sages ('better none'), our prose-writers, our mathematicians, our inventors in useful and mechanic arts, our legislators, our patriots, our statesmen, and our fighting-men, in the field and in the ring:—In these we challenge, and justly, all the world. We are not behind-hand with any people in all that depends on hard thinking and deep and firm feeling, on long heads and stout hearts:—But why must we excel also in the reverse of these,—in what depends on lively perceptions, on quick sensibility, and on a voluptuous effeminacy of temperament and character? An Englishman does not ordinarily pretend to combine his own gravity, plainness and reserve, with the levity, loquacity, grimace, and artificial politeness (as it is called) of a Frenchman. Why then will he insist upon engrafting the fine upon the domestic arts, as an indispensable consummation of the national character? We may indeed cultivate them as an experiment in natural history, and produce specimens of them, and exhibit them as rarities in their kind, as we do hot-house plants and shrubs; but they are not of native growth or origin. They do not spring up in the open air, but shrink from the averted eye of Heaven, like a Laplander into his hut. They do not sit as graceful ornaments, but as excrescences on the English character: they are 'like flowers in our caps, dying or ere they sicken:'—they are exotics and aliens to the soil. We do not import foreigners to dig our canals, or construct our machines, or solve difficult problems in political economy, or write Scotch novels for us—but we import our dancing-masters, our milliners, our Opera-singers, our valets, and our travelling cooks,—as till lately we did our painters and sculptors.

The English (we take it) are a nation with certain decided features and predominating traits of character; and if they have

any characteristics at all, this is one of them, that their feelings are internal rather than external, reflex rather than organic,—and that they are more inclined to contend with pain than to indulge in pleasure. 'The stern genius of the North,' says Schlegel, 'throws men back upon themselves.'—The progress of the Fine Arts has hitherto been slow, and wavering and unpromising in this country, 'liks the forced pace of a shuffling nag,' not like the flight of Pegasus; and their encouragement has been cold and backward in proportion. They have been wooed and won—as far as they have been won, which is no further than to a mere promise of marriage—'with coy, reluctant, amorous delay.' They have not rushed into our embraces, nor been mingled in our daily pastimes and pursuits. It is two hundred and fifty years since this island was civilized to all other intellectual purposes: but, till within half a century, it was a desert and a waste in art. Were there no *terræ filii* in those days; no brood of giants to spring out of the ground, and launch the mighty fragments of genius from their hands; to beautify and enrich the public mind; to hang up the lights of the eye and of the soul in pictured halls, in airy porticoes, and solemn temples; to illumine the land, and weave a garland for their own heads, like 'the crown which Ariadne wore upon her bridal-day,' and which still shines brighter in heaven? There were: but 'their affections did not that way tend.' They were of the tribe of Isaachar, and not of Judah. There were two sisters, Poetry and Painting: one was taken, and the other was left.

Were our ancestors insensible to the charms of nature, to the music of thought, to deeds of virtue or heroic enterprise? No. But they saw them in their mind's eye: they felt them at their heart's core, and there only. They did not translate their perceptions into the language of sense: they did not embody them in visible images, but in breathing words. They were more taken up with what an object suggested to combine with the infinite stores of fancy or trains of feeling, than with the single object itself; more intent upon the moral inference, the tendency and the result, than the appearances of things, however imposing or expressive, at any given moment of time. If their first impressions were less vivid and complete, their after-reflections were combined in a greater variety of striking resemblances, and thus drew a dazzling veil over their merely sensitive impressions, which deadened and neutralized them still more. Will it be denied that there is a wide difference, as to the actual result, between the mind of a Poet and a Painter? Why then should not this difference be inherent and original, as it undoubtedly is in individuals, and, to all appearance, in nations? Or why should we be uneasy because

the same country does not teem with all varieties and with each extreme of excellence and genius?[1]

In this importunate theory of ours, we misconstrue nature, and tax Providence amiss. In that short, but delightful season of the year, and in that part of the country where we now write, there are wild woods and banks covered with primroses and hyacinths for miles together, so that you cannot put your foot between, and with a gaudy show 'empurpling all the ground,' and branches loaded with nightingales whose leaves tremble with their liquid notes: Yet the air does not resound, as in happier climes, with shepherd's pipe or roundelay, nor are the village-maids adorned with wreaths of vernal flowers, ready to weave the braided dance, or 'returning with a choral song, when evening has gone down.' What is the reason? 'We also are *not* Arcadians!' We have not the same animal vivacity, the same tendency to external delight and show, the same ear for melting sounds, the same pride of the eye, or voluptuousness of the heart. The senses and the mind are differently constituted; and the outward influences of things, climate, mode of life, national customs and character, have all a share in producing the general effect. We should say that the eye in warmer climates drinks in greater pleasure from external sights, is more open and porous to them, as the ear is to sounds; that the sense of immediate delight is fixed deeper in the beauty of the object; that the greater life and animation of character gives a greater spirit and intensity of expression to the face, making finer subjects for history and portrait; and that the circumstances in which a people are placed in a genial atmosphere, are more favourable to the study of nature and of the human form. Claude could only have painted his landscapes in the open air; and the Greek statues were little more than copies from living, every-day forms.

Such a natural aptitude and relish for the impressions of sense gives not only more facility, but leads to greater patience, refinement, and perfection in the execution of works of art. What our own artists do is often up-hill work, against the grain:—not persisted in and brought to a conclusion for the love of the thing; but, after the first dash, after the subject is got in, and the gross general effect

[1] We are aware that time conquers even nature, and that the characters of nations change with a total change of circumstances. The modern Italians are a very different race of people from the ancient Romans. This gives us some chance. In the decomposition and degeneracy of the sturdy old English character, which seems fast approaching, the mind and muscles of the country may be sufficiently relaxed and softened to imbibe a taste for all the refinements of luxury and show; and a century of slavery may yield us a crop of the Fine Arts, to be soon buried in sloth and barbarism again.

produced, they grudge all the rest of their labour as a waste of time and pains. Their object is not to look at nature, but to have their picture *exhibited* and *sold*. The want of intimate sympathy with, and entire repose on nature, not only leaves their productions hard, violent, and crude, but frequently renders them impatient, wavering, and dissatisfied with their own walk of art, and never easy till they get into a different or higher one, where they think they can earn more money or fame with less trouble. By beginning over again, by having the same preliminary ground to go over, with new subjects or bungling experiments, they seldom arrive at that nice, nervous point that trembles on perfection. This last stage, in which art is as it were identified with nature, an English painter shrinks from with strange repugnance and peculiar abhorrence. The French style is the reverse of ours: it is all dry finishing without effect. We see their faults, and, as we conceive, their general incapacity for art: but we cannot be persuaded to see our own.

The want of encouragement, which is sometimes set up as an all-sufficient plea, will hardly account for this slow and irregular progress of English art. There was no premium offered for the production of dramatic excellence in the age of Elizabeth: there was no society for the encouragement of works of wit and humour in the reign of Charles II.: no committee of taste ever voted Congreve, or Steele, or Swift, a silver vase, or a gold medal, for their comic vein: Hogarth was not fostered in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy. In plain truth, that is not the way in which that sort of harvest is produced. The seeds must be sown in the mind: there is a fulness of the blood, a plethoric habit of thought, that breaks out with the first opportunity on the surface of society. Poetry has sprung up indigenously, spontaneously, at all times of our history, and under all circumstances, with or without encouragement: it is therefore a rich, natural product of the mind of the country, unforced, unpampered, unsophisticated. It is obviously and entirely genuine, 'the unbought grace of life.' If it be asked, why Painting has all this time kept back, has not dared to show its face, or retired ashamed of its poverty and deformity, the answer is plain—because it did not shoot out with equal vigour and luxuriance from the soil of English genius—because it was not the native language and idiom of the country. Why then are we bound to suppose that it will shoot up *now* to an unequalled height—why are we confidently told and required to predict to others that it is about to produce wonders, when we see no such thing; when these very persons tell us that there has been hitherto no such thing, but that it must and shall be revealed in their time and persons? And though they complain that that public patronage which they

invoke, and which they pretend is alone wanting to produce the high and palmy state of art to which they would have us look forward, is entirely and scandalously withheld from it, and likely to be so!

We turn from this subject to another not less melancholy or singular,—from the imperfect and abortive attempts at art in this country formerly, to its present state of degeneracy and decay in Italy. Speaking of Sir Joshua's arrival at Rome in the year 1749, Mr. Farington indulges in the following remarks.

'On his arrival at Rome, he found Pompeo Battoni, a native of Lucca, possessing the highest reputation. His name was, indeed, known in every part of Europe, and was every where spoken of as almost another Raphael; but in that great school of art, such was the admiration he excited, or rather such was the degradation of taste, that the students in painting had no higher ambition than to be his imitators.

'Battoni had some talent, but his works are dry, cold, and insipid. That such performances should have been so extolled in the very seat and centre of the fine arts, seems wonderful. But in this manner has public taste been operated upon; and from the period when art was carried to the highest point of excellence known in modern times, it has thus gradually declined. A succession of artists followed each other, who, being esteemed the most eminent in their own time, were praised extravagantly by an ignorant public; and in the several schools they established, their own productions were the only objects of study.

'So widely spread was the fame of Battoni, that, before Reynolds left England, his patron, Lord Edgcumbe, strongly urged the expediency of placing himself under the tuition of so great a man. This recommendation, however, on seeing the works of that master, he did not choose to follow:—which showed that he was then above the level of those whose professional views all concentrated in the productions of the popular favourite. Indeed nothing could be more opposite to the spirited execution, the high relish of colour, and powerful effect, which the works of Reynolds at that time possessed, than the tame and inanimate pictures of Pompeo Battoni. Taking a wiser course, therefore, he formed his own plan, and studied chiefly in the Vatican, from the works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Andrea del Sarto, with great diligence; such indeed was his application, that to a severe cold, which he caught in those apartments, he owed the deafness which continued during the remainder of his life.' p. 31.

This account may serve to show that Italy is no longer Italy: why it is so, is a question of greater difficulty. The soil, the climate,

the religion, the people are the same; and the men and women in the streets of Rome still look as if they had walked out of Raphael's pictures; but there is no Raphael to paint them, nor does any Leo arise to encourage them. This seems to prove that the perfection of art is the destruction of art: that the models of this kind, by their accumulation, block up the path of genius; and that all attempts at distinction lead, after a certain period, to a mere lifeless copy of what has been done before, or a vapid, distorted, and extravagant caricature of it. This is but a poor prospect for those who set out late in art, and who have all the excellence of their predecessors, and all the fastidious refinements of their own taste, the temptations of indolence, and the despair of vanity, to distract and encumber their efforts. The artists who revel in the luxuries of genius thus prepared by their predecessors, clog their wings with the honeyed sweets, and get drunk with the intoxicating nectar. They become servitors and lacqueys to Art, not devoted servants of Nature;—the fluttering, foppish, lazy retinue of some great name. The contemplation of unattainable excellence casts a film over their eyes, and unnerves their hands. They look on, and do nothing. In Italy, it costs them a month to paint a hand, a year an eye: the feeble pencil drops from their grasp, while they wonder to see an Englishman make a hasty copy of the Transfiguration, turn over a port-folio of Piranesi's drawings for their next historical design, and read Winckelman on *virtù*! We do much the same here, in all our collections and exhibitions of modern or ancient paintings, and of the Elgin marbles, to boot. A picture-gallery serves very well for a place to lounge in, and talk about; but it does not make the student go home and set heartily to work:—he would rather come again and lounge, and talk, the next day, and the day after that. He cannot do *all* that he sees there; and less will not satisfy his expansive and refined ambition. He would be all the painters that ever were—or none. His indolence combines with his vanity, like alternate doses of provocatives and sleeping-draughts. He copies, however, a favourite picture (though he thinks copying bad in general),—or makes a chalk-drawing of it—or gets some one else to do it for him.—We might go on: but we have written what many people will call a lampoon already!

There is another view of the subject more favourable and encouraging to ourselves, and yet not immeasurably so, when all circumstances are considered. All that was possible had been formerly done for art in Italy, so that nothing more was left to be done. That is not the case with us yet. Perfection is not the insurmountable obstacle to *our* success: we have enough to do, if we

knew how. That is some inducement to proceed. We can hardly be retrograde in our course. But there is a difficulty in the way,—no less than our Establishment in Church and State. Rome was the capital of the Christian and of the civilized world. Her mitre swayed the sceptres of the earth; and the Servant of Servants set his foot on the neck of kings, and deposed sovereigns with the signet of the Fisherman. She was the eye of the world, and her word was a law. She set herself up, and said, 'All eyes shall see me, and all knees shall bow to me.' She ruled in the hearts of the people by dazzling their senses, and making them drunk with hopes and fears. She held in her hands the keys of the other world to open or shut; and she displayed all the pomp, the trappings, and the pride of this. Homage was paid to the persons of her ministers; her worship was adorned and made alluring by every appeal to the passions and imaginations of its followers. Art was rendered tributary to the support of this grand engine of power; and Painting was employed, as soon as its fascination was felt, to aid the devotion, and rivet the faith of the Catholic believer. Thus religion was made subservient to interest, and art was called in to aid in the service of this ambitious religion. The patron-saint of every church stood at the head of his altar: the meekness of love, the innocence of childhood, 'amazing brightness, purity, and truth,' breathed from innumerable representations of the Virgin and Child; and the Vatican was covered with the acts and processions of Popes and Cardinals, of Christ and the Apostles. The churches were filled with these objects of art and of devotion: the very walls spoke. 'A present deity they shout around; a present deity the walls and vaulted roofs rebound.' This unavoidably put in requisition all the strength of genius, and all the resources of enthusiastic feeling in the country. The spectator sympathized with the artist's inspiration. No elevation of thought, no refinement of expression, could outgo the expectation of the thronging votaries. The fancy of the painter was but a spark kindled from the glow of public sentiment. This was a sort of patronage worth having. The zeal and enthusiasm and industry of native genius was stimulated to works worthy of such encouragement, and in unison with its own feelings. But by degrees the tide ebbed: the current was dried up or became stagnant. The churches were all supplied with altar-pieces: the niches were full, not only with scriptural subjects, but with the stories of every saint enrolled in the calendar, or registered in legendary lore. No more pictures were wanted,—and then it was found that there were no more painters to do them! The art languished, and gradually disappeared. They could not take down the Madona of Foligno, or new-stucco the ceiling at

Parma, that other artists might undo what Raphael and Correggio had done. Some of them, to be sure, did follow this desperate course; and spent their time, as in the case of Leonardo's Last Supper at Milan, in painting over, that is, in defacing the works of their predecessors. Afterwards, they applied themselves to landscape and classical subjects, with great success for a time, as we see in Claude and N. Poussin; but the original *state* impulse was gone.

What confirms the foregoing account, is, that at Venice, and other places out of the more immediate superintendence of the Papal See, though there also sacred subjects were in great request, yet the art being patronized by rich merchants and nobles, took a more decided turn to portraits;—magnificent indeed, and hitherto unrivalled, for the beauty of the costume, the character of the faces, and the marked pretensions of the persons who sat for them,—but still wildly remote from that public and national interest that it assumed in the Roman school. We see, in like manner, that painting in Holland and Flanders took yet a different direction; was mostly scenic and ornamental, or confined to local and personal subjects. Rubens's pictures, for example, differ from Raphael's by a total want of religious enthusiasm and studied refinement of expression, even where the subjects are the same; and Rembrandt's portraits differ from Titian's in the grossness and want of animation and dignity of his characters. There was an inherent difference in the look of a Doge of Venice or one of the Medici family, and that of a Dutch burgomaster. The climate had affected the picture, through the character of the sitter, as it affected the genius of the artist (if not otherwise) through the class of subjects he was constantly called upon to paint. What turn painting has lately taken, or is likely to take with us, now remains to be seen.

With the Memoirs of Sir Joshua Mr. Farington very properly connects the history of the institution of the Royal Academy from which he dates the hopes and origin of all sound art in this country. There is here at first sight an inversion of the usual order of things. The institution of Academies in most countries has been coeval with the decline of art: in ours, it seems, it is the harbinger, and main prop of its success. Mr. F. thus traces the outline of this part of his subject with the enthusiasm of an artist, and the fidelity of an historian.

'At this period (1760) a plan was formed by the artists of the metropolis to draw the attention of their fellow-citizens to their ingenious labours; with a view both to an increase of patronage, and the cultivation of taste. Hitherto works of that kind produced in the country were seen only by a few; the people in general knew nothing

of what was passing in the arts. Private collections were then inaccessible, and there were no public ones; nor any casual display of the productions of genius, except what the ordinary sales by auction occasionally offered. Nothing, therefore, could exceed the ignorance of a people who were in themselves learned, ingenious, and highly cultivated in all things, excepting the arts of design.

'In consequence of this privation, it was conceived that a Public Exhibition of the works of the most eminent Artists could not fail to make a powerful impression; and if occasionally repeated, might ultimately produce the most satisfactory effects. The scheme was no sooner proposed than adopted; and being carried into immediate execution, the result exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the projectors. All ranks of people crowded to see the delightful novelty; it was the universal topic of conversation; and a passion for the arts was excited by that first manifestation of native talent, which, cherished by the continued operation of the same cause, has ever since been increasing in strength, and extending its effects through every part of the Empire.

'The history of our Exhibitions affords itself the strongest evidence of their impressive effect upon public taste. At their commencement, though men of enlightened minds could distinguish and appreciate what was excellent, the admiration of the *many* was confined to subjects either gross or puerile, and commonly to the meanest efforts of intellect; whereas, at this time, the whole train of subjects most popular in the earlier exhibitions have disappeared. The loaf and cheese, that could provoke hunger, the cat and canary-bird, and the dead mackarel on a deal-board, have long ceased to produce astonishment and delight; while truth of imitation now finds innumerable admirers, though combined with the high qualities of beauty, grandeur, and taste.

'To our Public Exhibitions, and to arrangements that followed in consequence of their introduction, this change must be chiefly attributed. *The present generation appears to be composed of a new, and at least, with respect to the arts, a superior order of beings.* Generally speaking, their thoughts, their feelings, and language on these subjects differ entirely from what they were sixty years ago. No just opinions were at that time entertained on the merits of ingenious productions of this kind. The state of the public mind, incapable of discriminating excellence from inferiority, proved incontrovertibly that a right sense of art in the spectator can only be acquired by long and frequent observation; and that, without proper opportunities to improve the mind and the eye, a nation would continue insensible of the true value of the fine arts.

'The first or probationary Exhibition, which opened April 21st, 1760, was at a large room in the Strand, belonging to the society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, which had then been instituted five or six years. It is natural to conclude, that the first artist in the country was not indifferent to the success of a plan which promised to be so extensively useful. Accordingly, four of his pictures were for the first time here placed before the public, with whom, by the channel now opened, he continued in constant intercourse as long as he lived.

'Encouraged by the successful issue of the first experiment, the *artistical body* determined that it should be repeated the following year. Owing, however, to some inconveniences experienced at their former place of exhibition, and also to a desire to be perfectly independent in their proceedings, they engaged, for their next public display, a spacious room near the Spring Gardens' entrance into the Park; at which place the second Exhibition opened, May 9th, 1761. Here Reynolds sent his fine picture of Lord Ligonier on horseback, a portrait of the Rev. Laurence Sterne, and three others. . . .

'The artists had now fully proved the efficacy of their plan; and their income exceeding their expenditure, affording a reasonable hope of a permanent establishment, they thought they might solicit a Royal Charter of Incorporation; and having applied to his Majesty for that purpose, he was pleased to accede to their request. This measure, however, which was intended to consolidate the body of artists, was of no avail: on the contrary, it was probably the cause of its dissolution; for in less than four years a separation took place, which led to the establishment of the Royal Academy, and finally to the extinction of the incorporated Society. The charter was dated January 26th, 1765; the secession took place in October, 1768; and the Royal Academy was instituted December 10th in the same year.' p. 53.

On this statement we must be allowed to make a few remarks. First, the four greatest names in English art, Hogarth, Reynolds, Wilson[1] and West, were not formed by the Academy, but were formed before it; and the first gave it as his opinion, that it would be a death-blow to the art. He considered an Academy as a school for servile mediocrity, a hotbed for cabal and dirty competition, and a vehicle for the display of idle pretensions and empty parade.

Secondly, we agree with the writer as to the deplorable state of the art and of the public taste in general, which, at the period in

[1] This name, for some reason or other, does not once occur in these Memoirs.

question, was as gross as it was insipid: but we do not think that it has been improved so much since, as Mr. Farington is willing to suppose; nor that the Academy has taken more than *half-measures* for improving or refining it.

'They found it poor at first, and kept it so.'

They have attended to their own interests, and flattered their customers, while they have neglected or cajoled the public. They may indeed look back with triumph and pity to 'the cat and canary-bird, the dead mackarel and Deal board;' but they seem to rest satisfied with this conquest over themselves, and, 'leaving the things that are behind, have not pressed forward (with equal ardour) to the things that are before.' Theirs is a very moderate, not a Radical Reform in this respect. We do *not* find, even in the latest Exhibitions at Somerset House, 'innumerable examples of truth of imitation, combined with the high qualities of beauty, grandeur, and taste.' The mass of the pictures exhibited there are *not* calculated to give the English people a true notion, not merely of high art (as it is emphatically called), but of the genuine objects of art at all. We do not believe—to take a plain test of the progress we have made—that nine-tenths of the persons who go there annually, and who go through the Catalogue regularly, would know a Guido from a daub—the finest picture from one not badly executed perhaps, but done in the worst taste, and on the falsest principles. The vast majority of the pictures received there, and hung up in the most conspicuous places, are pictures painted to please the natural vanity or fantastic ignorance of the artist's sitters, their friends and relations, and to lead to more commissions for half and whole lengths—or else pictures painted purposely to be seen in the Exhibition, to strike across the Great Room, to catch attention, and force admiration, in the distraction and dissipation of a thousand foolish faces and new-gilt frames, by gaudy colouring and meretricious grace. We appeal to any man of judgment, whether this is not a brief, but true summary, of 'the annual show' at the Royal Academy? And is this the way to advance the interests of art, or to fashion the public taste? There is not one head in ten painted as a study from nature, or with a view to bring out the real qualities of the mind or countenance. If there is any such improvident example of unfashionable sincerity, it is put out of countenance by the prevailing tone of *rouged* and smiling folly, and affectation all around it.

The only pictures painted in any quantity as studies from nature, free from the glosses of sordid art and the tincture of vanity, are *portraits of places*; and it cannot be denied that there are many of

these that have a true and powerful look of nature: but then, as if this was a matter of great indifference, and nobody's business to see to, they are seldom anything more than bare sketches, hastily got up for the chance of a purchaser, and left unfinished to save time and trouble. They are not, in general, lofty conceptions or selections of beautiful scenery, but mere common out-of-door views, relying for their value on their literal fidelity; and where, consequently, the exact truth and perfect identity of the imitation is the more indispensable.—Our own countryman, Wilkie, in scenes of domestic and familiar life, is equally deserving of praise for the arrangement of his subjects, and care in the execution: but we have to lament that he too is in some degree chargeable with that fickleness and desultoriness in the pursuit of excellence, which we have noticed above as incident to our native artists, and which, we think, has kept him stationary, instead of being progressive, for some years past. He appeared at one time as if he was near touching the point of perfection in his peculiar department; and he *may* do it yet! But how small a part do his works form of the Exhibition, and how unlike all the rest!

It was the panic-fear that all this daubing and varnishing would be seen through, and the scales fall off from the eyes of the public, in consequence of the exhibition of some of the finest specimens of the Old Masters at the British Institution, that called into clandestine notoriety that disgraceful production, the *Catalogue Raisonnée*. The concealed authors of that work conceived, that a discerning public would learn more of the art from the simplicity, dignity, force and truth, of these admired and lasting models, in a short season or two, than they had done from the Exhibitions of the Royal Academy for the last fifty years: that they would see that it did not consist entirely in tints and varnishes and megilps and washes for the skin, but that all the effects of colour, and charms of expression, might be united with purity of tone, with articulate forms, and exquisite finishing. They saw this conviction rapidly taking place in the public mind, and they shrunk back from it 'with jealous leer malign.' They persuaded themselves, and had the courage to try to persuade others, that to exhibit approved specimens of art in general, selected from the works of the most famous and accomplished masters, was to destroy the germ of native art; was cruelly to strangle the growing taste and enthusiasm of the public for art in its very birth; was to blight the well-earned reputation, and strike at the honest livelihood of the liberal professors of the school of painting in England. They therefore set to work to decry these productions as worthless and odious in the sight of the true adept: they smeared over, with every epithet of low abuse, works and names sacred to fame, and to genera-

tions to come: they spared no pains to heap ridicule and obloquy on those who had brought these works forward: they did every thing to disgust and blind the public to their excellence, by showing in themselves a hatred and a loathing of all high excellence, and of all established reputation in art, in which their paltry vanity and mercenary spite were not concerned. They proved, beyond all contradiction, that to keep back the taste of the town, and the knowledge of the student, to the point to which *the Academy* had found it practicable to conduct it by its example, was the object of a powerful and active party of professional intriguers in this country. If the Academy had any hand, directly or indirectly, in this unprincipled outrage upon taste and decency, they ought to be disfranchised (like Grampound) to-morrow, as utterly unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

The alarm indeed (in one sense) was not unfounded: for many persons who had long been dazzled, not illumined, by the glare of the most modern and fashionable productions, began to open their eyes to the beauties and loveliness of painting, and to see reflected there as in a mirror those hues, those expressions, those transient and heavenly glances of nature, which had often charmed their own minds, but of which they could find the traces nowhere else, and became true worshippers at the shrine of genuine art. Whether this taste will spread beyond the immediate gratification of the moment, or stimulate the rising generation to new efforts, and to the adoption of a new and purer style, is another question; with regard to which, for reasons above explained, we are not very sanguine.

We have a great respect for *high* art, and an anxiety for its advancement and cultivation; but we have a greater still for the advancement and encouragement of *true* art. That is the first, and the last step. The knowledge of what is contained in nature is the only foundation of legitimate art; and the perception of beauty and power, in whatever objects or in whatever degree they subsist, is the test of real genius. The principle is the same in painting an archangel's or a butterfly's wing; and the very finest picture in the finest collection may be one of a very common subject. We speak and think of Rembrandt as Rembrandt, of Raphael as Raphael, not of the one as a portrait, of the other as a history painter. Portrait may become history, or history portrait, as the one or the other gives the soul or the mask of the face. '*That* is true history,' said an eminent critic, on seeing Titian's picture of Pope Julius II. and his two nephews. He who should set down Claude as a mere landscape painter, must know nothing of what Claude was in himself; and those who class Hogarth as a painter of low life, only show their

ignorance of human nature. High art does not consist in high or epic subjects, but in the manner of treating those subjects; and that manner among us, as far as we have proceeded, has we think been false and exceptionable. We appeal from the common cant on this subject to the Elgin marbles. They are high art, confessedly: But they are also true art, in our sense of the word. They do not deviate from truth and nature in order to arrive at a fancied superiority to truth and nature. They do not represent a vapid abstraction, but the entire, undoubted, concrete object they profess to imitate. They are like casts of the finest living forms in the world, taken in momentary action. They are nothing more: and therefore certain great critics who had been educated in the ideal school of art, think nothing of them. They do not conform to a vague, unmeaning standard, made out of the fastidious likings or dislikings of the artist; they are carved out of the living, imperishable forms of nature, as the marble of which they are composed was hewn from its native rock. They contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We cannot say so much of the general style of history-painting in this country, which has proceeded, as a first principle, on the determined and deliberate dereliction of living nature, both as means and end. Grandeur was made to depend on leaving out the details. Ideal grace and beauty were made to consist in neutral forms, and character and expression. The first could produce nothing but slovenliness; the second nothing but insipidity. The Elgin marbles have proved, by oracular demonstration, that the utmost freedom and grandeur of style is compatible with the minutest details,—the variety of the subordinate parts not destroying the masses in the productions of art more than in those of nature. Grandeur without softness and precision, is only another name for grossness. These invaluable fragments of antiquity have also proved, beyond dispute, that ideal beauty and historic truth do not consist in middle or *average* forms, &c. but in harmonious outlines, in unity of action, and in the utmost refinement of character and expression. We there see art following close in the footsteps of nature, and exalted, raised, refined with it to the utmost extent that either was capable of. With us, all this has been reversed; and we have discarded nature at first, only to flounder about, and be lost in a Limbo of Vanity. With them invention rose from the ground of imitation: with us, the boldness of the invention was acknowledged in proportion as no traces of imitation were discoverable. Our greatest and most successful candidates in the epic walk of art, have been those who founded their pretensions to be history-painters on their not being portrait-painters. They could not paint that which they had seen, and therefore they must be qualified

to paint that which they had not seen. There was not any one part of any one of their pictures good for any thing; and therefore the whole was grand, and an example of lofty art! There was not, in all probability, a single head in an acre of canvas, that, taken by itself, was more than a worthless daub, scarcely fit to be hung up as a sign at an alehouse door: But a hundred of these bad portraits or wretched caricatures, made, by numerical addition, an admirable historical picture! The faces, hands, eyes, feet, had neither beauty nor expression, nor drawing, nor colouring; and yet the composition and arrangement of these abortive and crude materials, which might as well or better have been left blanks, displayed the mind of the great master. Not one tone, one line, one look for the eye to dwell upon with pure and intense delight, in all this endless scope of subject and field of canvas.

We cannot say that we in general like very large pictures; for this reason, that, like overgrown men, they are apt to be bullies and cowards. They profess a great deal, and perform little. They are often a contrivance not to display magnificent conceptions to the greatest advantage, but to throw the spectator to a distance, where it is impossible to distinguish either gross faults or real beauties.

The late Mr. West's pictures were admirable for the composition and grouping. In these respects they could not be better: as we see in the print of the death of General Wolfe: but for the rest, he might as well have set up a parcel of figures in wood, and painted them over with a sign-post brush, and then copied what he saw, and it would have been just as good. His skill in drawing was confined to a knowledge of mechanical proportions and measurements, and was not guided in the line of beauty, or employed to give force to expression. He, however, laboured long and diligently to advance the interests of art in this his adopted country; and if he did not do more, it was the fault of the coldness and formality of his genius, not of the man.—Barry was another instance of those who scorn nature, and are scorned by her. He could not make a likeness of any one object in the universe: when he attempted it, he was like a drunken man on horseback; his eye reeled, his hand refused its office,—and accordingly he set up for an example of *the great style* in art, which, like charity, covers all other defects. It would be unfair at the same time to deny, that some of the figures and groupes in his pictures of the Olympic Games in the Adelphi, are beautiful designs after the antique, as far as outline is concerned. In colour and expression they are like wild Indians. The other pictures of his there, are not worthy of notice; except as warnings to the misguided student who would scale the high and abstracted steep of art, without following

the path of nature. Yet Barry was a man of genius, and an enthusiastic lover of his art. But he unfortunately mistook his ardent aspiration after excellence for the power to achieve it; assumed the capacity to execute the greatest works instead of acquiring it; supposed that 'the bodiless creations of his brain' were to start out from the walls of the Adelphi like a dream or a fairy tale;—and the result has been, that all the splendid illusions of his undigested ambition have, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wreck behind.' His name is not a light or beacon, but a by-word and an ill omen in art. What he has left behind him in writing on the subject, contains much real feeling and interesting thought.—Mr. Fuseli is another distinguished artist who complains that nature puts him out. But *his* distortions and vagaries are German, and not English: they lie like a night-mare on the breast of our native art. They are too recondite, obscure, and extravagant for us: we only want to get over the ground with large, clumsy strides, as fast as we can; and do not go out of our way in search of absurdity. We cannot consider his genius as naturalized among us, after the lapse of more than half a century: and if in saying this we do not pay him a compliment, we certainly do not intend it as a very severe censure. Mr. Fuseli has wit and words at will; and, though he had never touched a pencil, would be a man of extraordinary pretensions and talents.

Mr. Haydon is a young artist of great promise, and much ardour and energy; and has lately painted a picture which has carried away universal admiration. Without wishing to detract from that tribute of deserved applause, we may be allowed to suggest (and with no unfriendly voice) that he has there, in our judgment, laid in the groundwork, and raised the scaffolding, of a noble picture; but no more. There is spirit, conception, force, and effect: but all this is done by the first going over of the canvas. It is the foundation, not the superstructure of a first-rate work of art. It is a rude outline, a striking and masterly sketch.

Milton has given us a description of the growth of a plant—

> ——'So from the root
> Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves
> More airy; last the bright consummate flower.'

And we think this image might be transferred to the slow and perfect growth of works of imagination. We have in the present instance the rough materials, the solid substance and the glowing spirit of art; and only want the last finishing and patient working up. Does Mr. Haydon think this too much to bestow on works designed

to breathe the air of immortality, and to shed the fragrance of thought on a distant age? Does he regard it as beneath him to do what Raphael has done? We repeat it, here are bold contrasts, distinct grouping, a vigorous hand and striking conceptions. What remains then, but that he should add to bold contrasts fine gradations,—to masculine drawing nice inflections,—to vigorous pencilling those softened and trembling hues which hover like air on the canvas,—to massy and prominent grouping the exquisite finishing of every face and figure, nerve and artery, so as to have each part instinct with life and thought and sentiment, and to produce an impression in the spectator not only that he can touch the actual substance, but that it would shrink from the touch? In a word, Mr. Haydon has strength: we would wish him to add to it refinement. Till he does this, he will not remove the common stigma on British art. Nor do we ask impossibilities of him: we only ask him to make that a leading principle in his pictures, which he has followed so happily in parts. Let him take his own Penitent Girl as a model,—paint up to this standard through all the rest of the figures, and we shall be satisfied. His Christ in the present picture we do not like, though in this we have no less an authority against us than Mrs. Siddons. Mr. Haydon has gone at much length into a description of his *idea* of this figure in the Catalogue, which is a practice we disapprove: for it deceives the artist himself, and may mislead the public. In the idea he conveys to us from the canvas, there can be no deception. Mr. Haydon is a devoted admirer of the Elgin marbles; and he has taken advantage of their breadth and size and masses. We would urge him to follow them also into their details, their involved graces, the texture of the skin, the indication of a vein or muscle, the waving line of beauty, their calm and motionless expression; into all, in which they follow nature. But to do this, he must go to nature and study her more and more, in the greatest and the smallest things. In short, we wish to see this artist paint a picture (he has now every motive to exertion and improvement) which shall not only have a striking and imposing effect in the aggregate, but where the impression of the whole shall be the joint and irresistible effect of the value of every part. This is our notion of fine art, which we offer to him, not by way of disparagement or discouragement, but to do our best to promote the cause of truth and the emulation of the highest excellence.

We had quite forgotten the chief object of Mr. Farington's book, Sir Joshua's dispute with the Academy about Mr. Bonomi's election; and it is too late to return to it now. We think, however, that Sir Joshua was in the right, and the Academy in the wrong; but we

must refer those who require our reasons to Mr. Farington's account; who, though he differs from us in his conclusion, has given the facts too fairly to justify any other opinion. He has also some excellent observations on the increasing respectability of artists in society, from which, and from various other passages of his work, we are inclined to infer that, on subjects not relating to the Academy, he would be a sensible, ingenious, and liberal writer.

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We often hear it asked, *Whether Periodical Criticism is, upon the whole, beneficial to the cause of literature?* And this question is usually followed up by another, which is thought to settle the first, *Whether Shakespeare could have written as he did, had he lived in the present day?* We shall not attempt to answer either of these questions: But we will be bold to say, that we have at least one author at present, whose productions spring up free and numberless, in the very hotbed of criticism—a large and living refutation of the chilling and blighting effects of such a neighbourhood. 'But would not the author of Waverley himself,' resumes our tritical querist, 'have written better, if he had not had the fear of the periodical press before his eyes?' We answer, that he has no fear of the periodical press; and that we do not see how, in any circumstances, he could have written better than he does. 'But a single exception does not disprove the rule.' But he is not a single exception. Is there not Lord Byron? Are there not many more?—only that we are too near them to scan the loftiness of their pretensions, or to guess at their unknown duration. Genius carries on an unequal strife with Fame; nor will our bare word (if we durst presume to give it) make the balance even. Time alone can show who are the authors of mortal or immortal mould; and it is the height of wilful impertinence to anticipate its award, and assume, because certain living authors are new, that they never can become old.

Waving, however, any answer to these ingenious questions, we will content ourselves with announcing a truism on the subject, which, like many other truisms, is pregnant with deep thought,—*viz. That periodical criticism is favourable—to periodical criticism.* It contributes to its own improvement—and its cultivation proves not only that it suits the spirit of the times, but advances it. It certainly never flourished more than at present. It never struck its roots so deep, nor spread its branches so widely and luxuriantly. Is not the pro-

posal of this very question a proof of its progressive refinement? And what, it may be asked, can be desired more than to have the perfection of one thing at any one time? If literature in our day has taken this decided turn into a critical channel, is it not a presumptive proof that it ought to do so? Most things find their own level; and so does the mind of man. If there is a preponderance of criticism at any one period, this can only be because there are subjects, and because it is the time for it. We complain that this is a Critical age; and that no great works of Genius appear, because so much is said and written about them; while we ought to reverse the argument, and say, that it is because so many works of genius *have appeared*, that they have left us little or nothing to do, but to think and talk about them—that if we did not do that, we should do nothing so good—and if we do this well, we cannot be said to do amiss!

It has been stated as a kind of anomaly in the history of the Fine Arts, that periods of the highest civilization are not usually distinguished by the greatest works of original genius. But, instead of a remote or doubtful deduction, this, if closely examined, will be found a self-evident proposition. Take the case, for example, of ancient Greece. The time of its greatest splendour, was when its first statues, pictures, temples, tragedies, had been produced, when they existed in the utmost profusion, and the taste for them had become habitual and universal. But the time of the greatest Genius was undoubtedly the time that produced them,—which was necessarily antecedent to the other: So that if we were to wait till the era of the most general refinement, for the production of the highest models of excellence, we should never arrive at them at all; since it is these very models themselves, that, by being generally studied, and diffused through social life, give birth to the last degrees of taste and civilization. When the edifice is raised and finished in all its parts, we have nothing to do but to admire it; and invention gives place to judicious applause, or, according to the temper of the observers, to petty cavils. While the niches are empty, every nerve is strained, every faculty is called into play, to supply them with the masterpieces of skill or fancy: when they are full, the mind reposes on what has been done, or amuses itself by comparing one excellence with another. Hence a masculine boldness and creative vigour is the character of one age, a fastidious and effeminate delicacy that of a succeeding one. This seems to be the order of nature: and why should we repine at it? Why insist on combining all sorts of advantages (even the most opposite) forcibly together; or refuse to cultivate those that we possess, because there are others that we think more

highly of, but which are placed out of our reach? 'We are nothing, if not critical.' Be it so: but then let us be critical, or we shall be nothing.

The demand for works of original genius, the craving after them, the capacity for inventing them, naturally decay, when we have models of almost every species of excellence already produced to our hands. When this is the case, why call out for more? When art is a blank, then we want genius, enthusiasm, and industry to fill it up: when it is teeming with beauty and strength, then we want an eye to gaze at it, hands to point out its striking features, leisure to luxuriate in, and be enamoured of, its divine spirit. When we have Shakespeare, we do not want more Shakespeares: one Milton, one Pope or Dryden, is enough. Have we not plenty of Raphael's, of Rubens's, of Rembrandt's pictures in the world? *Terra plena nostri laboris*, is almost literally true of them. Who has seen all the fine pictures, or read all the fine poetry, that already exists?—and yet till we have done this, what do we want with more? It is like leaving our own native country unexplored, to travel into foreign lands. Do we not neglect the standard works to hunt after mere novelty? This is not wisdom, but affectation or caprice. Learning becomes, by degrees, an undigested heap, without pleasure or use. We do not see the absolute necessity why another work should be written, or another picture painted, till those that we already have are becoming worm-eaten, or mouldering into decay. We can hardly expect a new harvest till the old crop is off the ground. If we insist on absolute originality in living writers or artists, we should begin by destroying the works of their predecessors. We want another Osmyn to burn and spare not—and then the work of extermination and the work of regeneration would go on kindly together. Are we to learn all that is already known, and, at the same time, to invent more? This would indeed be the 'large discourse of reason looking before and after.' Who is there that can boast of having read all the books that have been written, and that are worth reading? Who is there that can read all those with which the modern press teems, and which, did they not daily disappear and turn to dust, the world would not be able to contain them? Are we to blame for despatching the most worthless of these from time to time, or for abridging the process of getting at the marrow of others, and thus leaving the learned at leisure to contemplate the time-hallowed relics, as well as the ephemeral productions, of literature?

To instance in our own language only, is there not many a sterling old author that lies neglected on solitary, unexplored shelves, or

tottering bookstalls, unknown to, or passed over by, the idle and the diligent, the republication of which would be the greatest service that could be performed by the modern man of letters? To master the Old English Dramatic Writers, the most esteemed novelists, the good old comedies and periodical works alone, would occupy the leisure of a life devoted to taste and study. If we look at the rise and progress, the maturity and decay, of each of these classes of excellence, we shall find that they were limited in duration, and successive. The deep rich tragic vein of Shakespeare, Webster, Ford, Deckar, Marlow, Beaumont and Fletcher, was discovered and worked out in the time of Elizabeth and the two first Stuarts. All that the heart of man could feel, all that the wit of man could express on the most striking and interesting occasions, had been exhausted by half a dozen great writers, who left little to their successors but pompous turgidity or smooth common-place,—the art of swelling trifles into importance, or taming rough boldness into insipidity. But Comedy rose as Tragedy fell; and, in the age of Charles II. and Queen Anne, Congreve, Wycherley and Vanburgh, were contemporary with Dryden, Lee and Rowe. Otway, it is true, belonged to the same period, a straggler from the veteran corps of tragic writers:—as, in a range of lofty mountains, we generally see one green hill thrown to a distance from the rest, and breaking the abrupt declivity into the level plain. But at each of the periods here spoken of, the Tragic or the Comic Muse was attended by a group of writers such as we can scarcely hope to see again, and such as we have no right to complain of seeing unrivalled, while *they* are themselves suffered to remain undisturbed in old collections and odd volumes. These probed the follies, as those unveiled the passions, of men: depicted jealousy, rage, ambition, love, madness, affectation, ignorance, conceit, in their most striking forms and picturesque contrasts: took possession of the strong-holds, the 'vantage points of vice or vanity: filled the Stage with the mask of living manners, or 'the pomp of elder days:' shook it with laughter, or drowned it with tears—poured out the wine of life, the living spirit of the drama, and left the lees to others. Little could afterwards be made of the subject, except by resorting to inferior branches of it, or to a second-hand imitation. No doubt, nature is exceedingly various; but the capital eminences, the choicest points of view, are limited; and when these have been once seized upon, we must either follow in the steps of others, or turn aside to humbler and less practicable subjects. When the highest places have been occupied, when the happiest strokes have been anticipated, the ambition of the poet flags: without the stimulus of novelty, the rapidity or eagerness of his blows

ceases; and as soon as he can avail himself of commonplace and conventional artifices, he shrinks from the task of original invention. Or, if he is bent on trying his native strength, and adding to the stock of what has been effected by others, it must be by striking into a new path, and cultivating some neglected plot of ground. So, the Periodical Essayists, Steele and Addison, succeeded to our great Comic Writers, and the Novelists, Fielding, Sterne, Smollett, to these; and each left works superior to any thing of the kind before, and unrivalled in their way by any thing since. Thus genius, like the sun, seems not to rise higher and higher, but from its first dawn to ascend to its meridian, and then decline; and art, like life, may be said to have its stated periods of infancy, manhood, and old age. Alas! the miracles of art stand often like proud monuments in the waste of time. The age of Leo the Tenth is like a rock rising out of the abyss,—with nothing before it, with nothing behind it! As art rose high then, so did it sink low afterwards: and the Vatican overlooks modern Italian art, stagnant, puny, steril, unwholesome, ague-struck, as Rome itself overlooks the marshes of the Campagna. What then? Does not the Vatican remain, the wonder of succeeding ages and surrounding nations? And when it yields (as yield it must) to time's destructive rage, and its glories crumble into dust, a new Vatican will arise, and other Raphaels and Michael Angelos will breathe the inspiration of genius upon its walls! As fires kindled in the night send their light to a vast distance, so Taste, an emanation from Genius, lingers long after it; and when its mild radiance is extinguished, then comes night and barbarism. Modern art, which took its rise in Italy, was transplanted indeed elsewhere, and flourished in Holland, Spain, and Flanders—it never took root in France, nor has it yet done so in England—but the soil, where it first sprung up, became effete soon after, and has produced scarcely any thing worth naming since.

Not only are literature and art circumscribed by the limits of nature or the mind of man, but each age or nation has a standard of its own, which cannot be trespassed upon with impunity. Tragedy was at its height in France, when it was on the decline with us; but then it was in a totally different style of composition, which could never be successfully naturalized in this country. Popularity can only be insured by the sympathy of the audience with any given mode of representing nature. The English genius excludes sententious and sentimental declamations on the passions; and Shakespeare, were he alive, would be 'cabin'd, cribbed, confined,' to say the least, on that very stage where his plays still flourish, by the change of feeling and circumstances. He would not have scope for his fancy: the passion would often seem groundless and overwrought. To produce any

thing new and striking at present, it is necessary to shift the scene altogether, to take new subjects, an entire new set of *Dramatis Personæ*,—to pitch the interest in the Heart of Mid-Lothian, or suspend it in air with the Children of the Mist. We see what Sir Walter Scott has done in this way, by turning up again to the day the rich accumulated mould of ancient manners and wild unexplored scenery of his native land; and we already see what some of his imitators have done. In a word, literature is confined not only within certain *natural*, but also within *local* and *temporary* limits, which necessarily have fewer available topics; and when these are exhausted, it becomes a *caput mortuum*, a shadow of itself. Nothing is easier, for instance, than to show how, from the alteration of manners, the brilliant dialogue of the older comedy has gradually disappeared from the stage. The style of our common conversation has undergone a total change from the personal and *piquant* to the critical and didactic; and, instead of aiming at elegant raillery or pointed repartee, the most polished circles now discuss general topics, or analyze abstruse problems. Wit, unless it is exercised on an indiscriminate subject, is considered as an impertinence in civil life: yet we complain that the stage is dull and prosaic.

Farther, the Fine Arts, by their spread, interfere with one another, and hinder the growth of originality. All the greatest things are done by the division of labour—by the intense concentration of a number of minds, each on a single and chosen object. But by the progress of cultivation, different arts and exercises stretch out their arms to impede, not to assist one another. Politics blend with poetry, painting with literature; fashion and elegance must be combined with learning and study: and thus the mind gets a smattering of every thing, and a mastery in none. The mixing of acquirements, like the *mixing of liquors*, is no doubt a bad thing, and *muddles* the brain; but in a certain stage of society, it is in some degree unavoidable. Rembrandt lived retired in his cell of gorgeous light and shade. Night and Day waited upon him by turns, or together: his eye gazed on the dazzling gloom, nor did he ask for any other object. He existed wholly in this part of his art, which he has stamped on his canvas with such vast and wondrous power. He was not distracted or diverted from his favourite study by other things, by penning a Sonnet, or reading the Morning's Paper. Had he lived in our time, or in a state of manners like ours, he would have been a hundred other things, but not Rembrandt—a polite scholar, an imitator probably of the antique, a pleasing versifier, 'a chemist, statesman, fiddler, and buffoon,'—every thing but what he was, the great master of light and shade! Michael Angelo, again, had

diversity of genius enough, and grasped more arts than one with hallowed hands. Yet did he not use to say, that 'Painting was jealous, and required the whole man to herself?' How many modern accomplishments would it take to make a Michael Angelo? Yet perhaps the flutter of idle pretensions, the glitter of fashion, the cant of criticism, with the sense of his own deficiencies in frivolous pursuits, might have dismayed the dauntless Youth who, with a blow of his chisel, repaired the Meleager; who afterwards carved the Moses, painted the Prophets and Sybils, reared the dome of St. Peter's, and fortified his native city against a foreign foe! The little might have turned aside, in his triple career of renown, him whom the great could not intimidate.

One effect of the endowment of Institutions for the Fine Arts is, to make the union of the accidents of fortune and fashion, that is, of the extrinsic and meretricious, indispensable to the artist. He is violently taken out of his own sphere, and thrust into one for which he is qualified neither by nature nor habit. He must be able to make speeches to assembled multitudes, to hold conversation with Princes. He climbs to the highest honours of his profession by arts which have nothing to do with it—by frivolous or servile means. He must have the ear of committees, the countenance of the great. He takes precedence as a matter of etiquette or costume. He rises, as he would at college or at court. The chair of a Royal Academy for the Fine Arts must be filled by a gentleman and scholar. So Sir Thomas Lawrence (*absit invidia*) is chosen President, not more because he is the best portrait-painter in existence, than because he is one of the finest gentlemen of the day. This is confounding the essential differences of things, and weakening the solid superstructure of art at its foundations.—A scholar was formerly another name for a sloven, an artist was known only by his works. Now, a professional man, who should come into the world, relying on his genius or learning for his success, without other advantages, would be looked upon as a pedant, a barbarian, or a poor creature. 'Though he should have all knowledge, and could speak with the tongues of angels, yet, without *affectation*, he would be nothing.' He who is not acquainted with the topic, who is not fashioned in the mode of the day, is no better than a brute. We will not have the arts and sciences 'relegated to obscure cloisters and villages: no, we will have them to lift up their sparkling front in courts and palaces,'—in drawing-rooms and booksellers' shops. 'The toe of the scholar must tread so close on the heel of the courtier, that it galls his kibe.'

This is also a consequence of the approximation and amalgamation of different ranks and pretensions from the more general diffusion of

knowledge. Each takes something of the colour, or borrows some of the advantages, of its neighbour. A reflected light is thrown on all parts of society. The polite affect literature: the literary affect to be polite. Such a state of things, no doubt, produces a great deal of mock-patronage and mock-gentility. What then? It cannot be prevented: and is it not better to make the most of this florid and composite style of manners, than to proscribe and stigmatize it altogether, or insist on going back to the simple Doric or pure Gothic —to barbaric wealth or cynical knowledge? 'Take the good the Gods provide ye'—is our motto, and our advice. The impulse that sways the human mind cannot be created by a *fiat* of captious discontent: it floats on the tide of mighty CIRCUMSTANCE. By resisting this natural bias, and peevishly struggling against the stream, we shall only lose the favourable opportunities we possess, both for enjoyment and for use. It is not sufficient to say, 'Let there be Shakespeares, and there were Shakespeares:'—but we have writers in great numbers, respectable in their way, and suited to the mediocrity of the age we live in: And, by cultivating sound principles of taste and criticism, we can still point out the beauties of the old authors, and improve the style of the new. There is a change in the world, and we must conform to it. Instead of striving to revive the spirit of old English literature, which is impossible, unless we could restore the same state of things, and push the world back two centuries in its course, let us add the last polish and fine finish to the modern *Belles-Lettres*. Instead of imitating the poets or prose writers of the age of Elizabeth, let us admire them at a distance. Let us remember, that there is a great gulf between them and us—the gulf of ever-rolling years. Let them be something sacred, and venerable to the imagination: But let us be contented to serve as priests at the shrine of ancient genius, and not attempt to mount the pedestal ourselves, or disturb the sanctuary with our unwarranted pretensions.

This is the course dictated no less by modesty than wisdom. Half the cant of criticism (on the other side of the question) is envy of the moderns, rather than admiration of the ancients. It is not that we really wish our contemporaries to rival their predecessors in grandeur, in force and depth; but that we wish them to fall short of themselves in elegance, in taste, in ingenuity, and facility. The exclusive outcry in favour of ancient models, is a *diversion* to the exercise of modern talents, and a misdirection to the age. If we cannot produce the great and lasting works of former times, we may at least improve our knowledge of the principles on which they were raised, and of the distinguishing characteristics of each. If we have nothing to show equal to some of these, let us make it up (to the

best of our power) by a taste susceptible of the beauties of all. If we do not succeed in solid folio, let us excel in light duodecimo. If we are superficial, let us be brilliant. If we cannot be profound, let us at least be popular.

Why should we dismiss *the reading public* with contempt, when we have so little chance with the next generation? Literature formerly was a sweet Heremitress, who fed on the pure breath of Fame, in silence and in solitude; far from the madding strife, in sylvan shade or cloistered hall, she trimmed her lamp or turned her hourglass, pale with studious care, and aiming only to 'make the age to come her own!' She gave her life to the perfecting some darling work, and bequeathed it, dying, to posterity! Vain hope, perhaps; but the hope itself was fruition—calm, serene, blissful, unearthly! Modern literature, on the contrary, is a gay Coquette, fluttering, fickle, vain; followed by a train of flatterers; besieged by a crowd of pretenders; courted, she courts again; receives delicious praise, and dispenses it; is impatient for applause; pants for the breath of popularity; renounces eternal fame for a newspaper puff; trifles with all sorts of arts and sciences; coquettes with fifty accomplishments —*mille ornatus habet, mille decenter*; is the subject of polite conversation; the darling of private parties; the go-between in politics; the directress of fashion; the polisher of manners; and, like her winged prototype in Spenser,

'Now this now that, she tasteth tenderly,'

glitters, flutters, buzzes, spawns, dies,—and is forgotten! But the very variety and superficial polish show the extent and height to which knowledge has been accumulated, and the general interest taken in letters.

To dig to the bottom of a subject through so many generations of authors, is now impossible: the concrete mass is too voluminous and vast to be contained in any single head; and therefore we must have essences and samples as substitutes for it. We have collected a superabundance of raw materials: the grand *desideratum* now is, to fashion and render them portable. Knowledge is no longer confined to the few: the object therefore is, to make it accessible and attractive to the many. The *Monachism* of literature is at an end; the cells of learning are thrown open, and let in the light of universal day. We can no longer be churls of knowledge, ascetics in pretension. We must yield to the spirit of change (whether for the better or worse); and 'to beguile the time, look like the time.' A modern author may (without much imputation of his wisdom) declare for a short life and a merry one. He may be a little gay, thoughtless,

and dissipated. Literary immortality is now let on short leases, and he must be contented to succeed by rotation. A scholar of the olden time had resources, had consolations to support him under many privations and disadvantages. A light (that light which penetrates the most clouded skies) cheered him in his lonely cell, in the most obscure retirement: and, with the eye of faith, he could see the meanness of his garb exchanged for the wings of the Shining Ones, and the wedding-garment of the Spouse. Again, he lived only in the contemplation of old books and old events; and the remote and future became habitually present to his imagination, like the past. He was removed from low, petty vanity, by the nature of his studies, and could wait patiently for his reward till after death. We exist in the bustle of the world, and cannot escape from the notice of our contemporaries. We must please to live, and therefore should live to please. We must look to the public for support. Instead of solemn testimonies from the learned, we require the smiles of the fair and the polite. If princes scowl upon us, the broad shining face of the people may turn to us with a favourable aspect. Is not this life (too) sweet? Would we change it for the former if we could? But the great point is, that *we cannot*! Therefore, let Reviews flourish—let Magazines increase and multiply—let the Daily and Weekly Newspapers live for ever! We are optimists in literature, and hold, with certain limitations, that, in this respect, whatever is, is right!

It has been urged as one fatal objection against periodical criticism, that it is too often made the engine of party-spirit and personal invective. This is an abuse of it greatly to be lamented; but in fact, it only shows the extent and importance of this branch of literature, so that it has become the organ of every thing else, however alien to it. The current of political and individual obloquy has run into this channel, because it has absorbed every topic. The bias to miscellaneous discussion and criticism is so great, that it is necessary to insert politics in a sort of sandwich of literature, in order to make them at all palatable to the ordinary taste. The war of political pamphlets, of virulent pasquinades, has ceased, and the ghosts of Junius and Cato, of Gracchus and Cincinnatus, no longer 'squeak and gibber' in our modern streets, or torment the air with a hubbub of hoarse noises. A Whig or Tory *tirade* on a political question, the abuse of a public character, now stands side by side in a fashionable Review, with a disquisition on ancient coins, or is introduced right in the middle of an analysis of the principles of taste. This is a violation, no doubt, of the rules of decorum and order, and might well be dispensed with: but the stock of malice and prejudice in the world is much the same, though it has found a more classical and

agreeable vehicle to vent itself. Mere politics, mere personal altercation, will not go down without an infusion of the Belles-Lettres and the Fine Arts. This makes decidedly either for the refinement or the frivolity of our taste. It is found necessary to poison or to sour the public mind, by going to the well-head of polite literature and periodical criticism,—which shows plainly how many drink at that fountain, and will drink at no other. As a farther example of this rage for conveying information in an easy and portable form, we believe that booksellers will often refuse to purchase in a volume, what they will give a handsome price for, if divided piecemeal, and fitted for occasional insertion in a newspaper or magazine; so that the only authors who, as a class, are not starving, are periodical essayists, as almost the only writers who can keep their reputation above water are anonymous critics. But we have enlarged sufficiently on the general question, and shall now proceed to a more particular account of the state of the Periodical Press. We consider this Article, however, as an exception to our general rules of criticizing, and protest against its being turned into a precedent; for if our several contemporaries were to criticize one author as a constant habit, there would be no end of the repeated reflections and continually lessening perspective of cavils and objections, which would resemble nothing in nature but the *Caffée des Milles Colonnes!*

The staple literature of the Periodical Press may, we presume, be fairly divided into Newspapers, Magazines, and Reviews; and of each of these, if we have courage to go through with it, we shall say a word or two in their order.

The St. James's Chronicle is, we have understood, the oldest existing paper in London. We are not quite sure whether it was in this or in another three-times-a-week paper (the Englishman [1]) that we first met with some extracts from Mr. Burke's Letter to a Noble Lord in the year 1796, and on the instant became converts to his familiar, inimitable, powerful prose-style. The richness of Burke showed, indeed, more magnificent, contrasted with the meagreness of the ordinary style of the paper into which his invective was thrown. Let any one, indeed, who may be disposed to disparage modern

[1] The Editor of the Englishman for many years was a Mr. Radcliffe. He had been formerly attached to some of our embassies into Italy, where his lady accompanied him; and here she imbibed that taste for picturesque scenery, and the obscure and wild superstitions of mouldering castles, of which she has made so beautiful a use in her Romances. The fair authoress kept herself almost as much *incognito* as the Author of Waverley; nothing was known of her but her name in the title page. She never appeared in public, nor mingled in private society, but kept herself apart, like the sweet bird that sings its solitary notes, shrowded and unseen.

intellect and modern letters, look over a file of old newspapers (only thirty or forty years back), or into those that, by prescription, keep up the old-fashioned style in accommodation to the habitual dulness of their readers, and compare the poverty, the meanness, the want of style and matter in their original paragraphs, with the amplitude, the strength, the point and terseness which characterize the leading journals of the day, and he will perhaps qualify the harshness of his censure. We have not a Burke, indeed—we have not even a Junius; but we have a host of writers, working for their bread on the spur of the occasion, and whose names are not known, formed upon the model of the best writers who have gone before them, and reflecting many of their graces.

Let any one (for instance) compare the St. James's Chronicle, which is on the model of the old school, with the Morning Chronicle, which is, or was at least, at the head of the new. This paper we have been long used to think the best, both for amusement and instruction, that issued from the daily press. It is full, but not crowded; and we have breathing-spaces and openings left to pause upon each subject. We have plenty and variety. The reader of a morning paper ought not to be crammed to satiety. He ought to rise from the perusal light and refreshed. Attention is paid to every topic, but none is overdone. There is a liberality and decorum. Every class of readers is accommodated with its favourite articles, served up with taste, and without sparing for the sharpest sauces.[1] A copy of verses is supplied by one of the popular poets of the day; a prose essay appears in another page, which, had it been written two hundred years ago, might still have been read with admiration; a correction of a disputed reading, in a classical author, is contributed by a learned correspondent. The politician may look profound over a grave dissertation on a point of constitutional history; a lady may smile at a rebus or a charade. Here, Pitt and Fox, Burke and Sheridan, maintained their nightly combats over again; here Porson criticized, and Jekyll punned. An appearance of conscious dignity

[1] Many of these articles (particularly the Theatrical Criticism) are unavoidably written over night, just as the paper is going to the press, without correction or previous preparation. Yet they will often stand a comparison with more laboured compositions. It is curious, that what is done at so short a notice should bear so few marks of haste. In fact, there is a kind of *extempore* writing, as well as *extempore* speaking. Both are the effect of necessity and habit. If a man has but words and ideas in his head, he can express himself in a longer or a shorter time (with a little practice), just as he has a motive for doing it. Where there is the necessary stimulus for making the effort, what is given from a first impression, what is struck off at a blow, is in many respects better than what is produced on reflection, and at several heats.

is kept up, even in the Advertisements, where a principle of proportion and separate grouping is observed; the announcement of a new work is kept distinct from the hiring of a servant of all-work, or the sailing of a steam-yacht.

The late Mr. Perry, who raised the Morning Chronicle into its present consequence, held the office of Editor for nearly forty years; and he held firm to his party and his principles all that time,—a long term for political honesty and consistency to last! He was a man of strong natural sense, some acquired knowledge, a quick tact; prudent, plausible, and with great heartiness and warmth of feeling. This last quality was perhaps of more use to him than any other, in the sphere in which he moved. His cordial voice and sanguine mode of address made friends, whom his sincerity and gratitude insured. An overflow of animal spirits, sooner than any thing else, floats a man into the tide of success. Nothing cuts off sympathy so much as the obvious suppression of the kindly impulses of our nature. He who takes another slightly by the hand, will not stick to him long, nor in difficulties. Others perceive this, and anticipate the defection, or the hostile blow. Among the ways and means of success in life, if good sense is the first, good nature is the second. If we wish others to be attached to us, we must not seem averse or indifferent to them. Perry was more vain than proud. This made him fond of the society of lords, and them of his. His shining countenance reflected the honour done him, and the alacrity of his address prevented any sense of awkwardness or inequality of pretensions. He was a little of a coxcomb, and we do not think he was a bit the worse for it. A man who does not think well of himself, generally thinks ill of others; nor do they fail to return the compliment. Towards the last, he, to be sure, received visitors in his library at home, something in the style of the Marquis Marialva in Gil Blas. He affected the scholar. On occasion of the death of Porson, he observed that '*Epithalamia* were thrown into his coffin;' of which there was an awkward correction next day,—'For *Epithalamia* read *Epicedia*!' The worst of it was, that a certain consciousness of merit, with a little overweening pretension, sometimes interfered with the conduct of the paper. Mr. Perry was not like a contemporary editor, who never writes a sentence himself, and assigns, as a reason for it, that 'he has too many interests to manage as it is, without the addition of his own literary vanity.' The Editor of the Morning Chronicle wrote up his own paper; and he had an ambition to have it thought, that every good thing in it, unless it came from a lord, or an acknowledged wit, was his own. If he paid for the article itself, he thought he paid for the credit of it also. This sometimes brought him into

awkward situations. He wished to be head and chief of his own paper, and would not have any thing behind the editor's desk, greater than the desk itself. He was frequently remiss himself, and was not sanguine that others should make up the deficiency. He possessed a most tenacious memory, and often, in the hottest periods of Parliamentary warfare, carried off half a Debate on his own shoulders. The very first time he was intrusted with the task of reporting speeches in the House of Commons, a singular lapse of memory occurred to him. Soon after he had taken his seat in the Gallery, some accident put him out, and he remained the whole night stupified and disconcerted. When the House broke up, he returned to the office of the paper for which he was engaged, in despair, and professing total inability to give a single word of it. But he was prevailed upon to sit down at the writing-desk. The sluices of memory, which were not empty, but choked up, began to open, and they poured on, till he had nearly filled the paper with a *verbatim* account of the speech of a Lord Nugent, when his employer, finding his mistake, told him this would never do, but he must begin over again, and merely give a general and *historical* account of what had passed. Perry snapped his fingers at this release from his terrors; and it has been observed, that the *historical* mode of giving a Debate was his delight ever afterwards. From the time of Woodfall, the Morning Chronicle was distinguished by its superior excellence in reporting the proceedings of Parliament. Woodfall himself often filled the whole paper without any assistance. This, besides the arduousness of the undertaking, necessarily occasioned delay. At present, several Reporters take the different speeches in succession—(each remaining an hour at a time)—go immediately, and transcribe their notes for the press; and, by this means, all the early part of a debate is actually printed before the last speaker has risen upon his legs. The public read the next day at breakfast-time (perhaps), what would make a hundred octavo pages, every word of which has been spoken, written out, and printed within the last twelve or fourteen hours!

The Times Newspaper is, we suppose, entitled to the character it gives itself, of being the 'Leading Journal of Europe,' and is perhaps the greatest engine of temporary opinion in the world. Still it is not to our taste—either in matter or manner. It is elaborate, but heavy; full, but not readable: it is stuffed up with official documents, with matter-of-fact details. It seems intended to be deposited in the office of the Keeper of the Records, and might be imagined to be composed as well as printed with a steam-engine. It is pompous, dogmatical, and full of pretensions, but neither light, various, nor agreeable. It sells more, and contains more, than any other paper; and when you

have said this, you have said all. It presents a most formidable front to the inexperienced reader. It makes a toil of a pleasure. It is said to be calculated for persons in business, and yet it is the business of a whole morning to get through it. Bating voluminous details of what had better be omitted, the same things are better done in the Chronicle. To say nothing of poetry (which may be thought too frivolous and attenuated for the atmosphere of the city), the prose is inferior. No equally sterling articles can be referred to in it, either for argument or wit. More, in short, is effected in the Morning Chronicle, without the formality and without the effort. The Times is not a *classical* paper. It is a commercial paper, a paper of business, and it is conducted on principles of trade and business. It floats with the tide: it sails with the stream. It has no other principle, as we take it. It is not ministerial; it is not patriotic; but it is *civic*. It is the lungs of the British metropolis; the mouthpiece, oracle, and echo of the Stock Exchange; the representative of the mercantile interest. One would think so much gravity of style might be accompanied with more steadiness and weight of opinion. But *the* Times conforms to the changes of the time. It bears down upon a question, like a first-rate man of war, with streamers flying and all hands on deck; but if the first broadside does not answer, turns short upon it, like a triremed galley, firing off a few paltry squibs to cover its retreat. It takes up no falling cause; fights no up-hill battle; advocates no great principle; holds out a helping hand to no oppressed or obscure individual. It is 'ever strong upon the stronger side.' Its style is magniloquent; its spirit is not magnanimous. It is valiant, swaggering, insolent, with a hundred thousand readers at its heels; but the instant the rascal rout turn round with the 'whiff and wind' of some fell circumstance, the Times, the renegade, inconstant Times, turns with them! Let the mob shout, let the city roar, and the voice of the Times is heard above them all, with outrageous deafening clamour; but let the vulgar hubbub cease, and no whisper, no echo of it is ever after heard of in the Times. Like Bully Bottom in the play, it then 'aggravates its voice so, as if it were a singing dove, an it were any nightingale.' Its coarse ribaldry is turned to a harmless jest; its swelling rhodomontade sinks to a vapid commonplace; and the editor amuses himself in the interval, before another great explosion, by collecting and publishing from time to time, Affidavits of the numbers of his paper sold in the last stormy period of the press.

The Times rose into notice through its diligence and promptitude in furnishing Continental intelligence, at a time when foreign news was the most interesting commodity in the market; but at present it

engrosses every other department. It grew obscene and furious during the revolutionary war; and the nicknames which Mr. Walter bestowed on the French Ruler were the counters with which he made his fortune. When the game of war and madness was over, and the proprietor wished to pocket his dear-bought gains quietly, he happened to have a writer in his employ who wanted to roar on, as if any thing more was to be got by his continued war-whoop, and who scandalized the whole body of disinterested Jews, contractors, and stock-jobbers, by the din and smithery with which, in the piping time of peace, he was for rivetting on the chains of foreign nations. It was found, or thought at least, that this could not go on. The tide of gold no longer flowed up the river, and the tide of Billingsgate and blood could no longer flow down it, with any pretence to decency, morality, or religion. There is a cant of patriotism in the city: there is a cant of humanity among hackneyed politicians. The *writer* of the LEADING ARTICLE, it is true, was a fanatic; but the *proprietor* of the LEADING JOURNAL was neither a martyr nor confessor. The principles gave way to the policy of the paper; and this was the origin of the NEW TIMES.

This new Morning paper is one which every Tory ought to encourage. If the friend of the people cannot *away with* it, the friend of power ought not to be without it. Nay, it may be of use to the liberal or the wavering; for it goes all lengths, boggles at no consequences, and unmasks the features of despotism fearlessly and shamelessly, without remorse and without pity. The Editor deals in no half measures, in no half principles; but is a thorough-paced stickler for the modernized doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance. Dr. Sacheverel, in his day, could not go beyond him. He is no flincher, no trimmer; he 'champions *Legitimacy* to the outrance.' There is something in this spirit, that if it exposes the possessor to hatred, exempts him from contempt. The present Editor of the New, and late Editor of the Old Times, whatever we may think of his opinions, must be acknowledged to be staunch, determined, and consistent in maintaining them. He is a violent partisan, blind to the blots in his own cause; and, by this means, he often opens the eyes of others to them. He has no evasion, no disguises. Let him take up a wrong argument (which he does on principle) and no one can beat him in pushing it to the *reductio ad absurdum*: let him engage in a bad cause (which he does by instinct) and no consideration of prudence or compassion will make him turn back. He is a logician, and will not bate one ace of his argument. He goes the utmost length of the spirit, as well as the principles, of his party. If we like the spirit of despotism, we see it exemplified

in his views and sentiments: if we like the principles, we find them in full perfection, and without any cowardly drawback in his reasonings. He is the true organ of the *Ultras*, at home or abroad. It is the creed, we believe, of all legitimate princes, that the world was made for them; and this sentiment is stamped, fixed, seared in inverted but indelible characters, on the mind of the Editor of the New Times, who, we believe, would march to a stake, in testimony of the opinion that he and all mankind ought to be held as slaves, in fee and perpetuity, by half a dozen lawful rulers of the species. He lays it down, for instance, in so many words, that 'Louis XVIII. has the same undoubted right (in kind and in degree) to the throne of France, that Mr. Coke has to his estate of Holkham in Norfolk:' and from this declaration he never swerves, not even in thought. Other writers may argue upon the assumption of this principle, or now and then, in a moment of unexpected trimph, avow it; but he alone has the glory and the shame of making it the acknowledged, undisguised basis of all his reasoning. He is fascinated, in short, with the abstract image of royalty; he has swallowed love-powders from despotism; he is drunk with the spirit of servility; mad with the hatred of liberty; flagrant, obscene in the exposure of the shameful parts of his cause; and his devotion to power amounts to a prostration of all his faculties. It is strange, as well as lamentable, to see this misguided enthusiasm, this preposterous pertinacity in wilful degradation. Yet it is not without its use. Its honesty warns us of the consequences we have to dread: as its consistency insures us some compensation in some part or other of the system. There is no pure evil, but hypocrisy. Every principle (almost) if consistently followed up, leads to some good, by some reaction on itself. It is only by tergiversation, by tricking, by being false to all opinion, and picking out the bad of every cause to suit it to our own interest, that we get a vile compost of intolerable and opposite abuses. Thus, we should say that superstition, while it was real, with all its evils, had its redeeming points, in the faith and zeal of those who were actuated by it, into whatever excesses they might be hurried: but we object entirely to modern fanaticism, which is the patchwork product of a perverted intellect, with all the absurdity and all the mischief, without one particle of sincerity, to justify it. Despotism even has its advantages; but we see no good in modern despotism, which has lost its reverence, and retains only the odiousness of power. The STATE DOCTOR of the NEW TIMES is, however, a perfect *Preux Chevalier*, compared with some of his hireling contemporaries: another Peter the Hermit, to preach an everlasting crusade against Jacobins and Levellers, and to rekindle another Holy War in favour of *Divine Right*.

There is a dramatic interest in the fury of his exclamations, which induces us to make some allowance for the barbarism of his creed. He is less mischievous than when he wrote in the Old Times, which trimmed between power and popularity, and oiled the wheels of Despotism with the cant of Liberty. He does not now fawn on public opinion, but sets it at defiance, both in theory and practice. He does not mix up the grossness of faction with the refinements of sophistry. He does not uphold the principles, and insult the persons, of the aristocracy. No one was more bitter against the late queen, or more able or strenuous in the cause of her enemies; but he maintained a certain respect for her rank and birth. He did not think that every species of outrage and indecency, heaped on the daughter of a prince, the consort of a king, was the most delicate compliment that could be paid to royalty; but conceived, that when we forget what is due to place and title, we make a gap in ceremony and outward decorum, through which all such persons may be assailed with impunity. Perhaps this starched, pedantic preference of principles to persons, may not, after all, be the surest road to court-favour; but we respect any one who is ever liable to a frown from a patron, or to be left in a minority by his own party. There is nothing truly contemptible, but that which is always tacking and veering before the breath of power.

This naturally leads us to the Courier; which is a paper of shifts and expedients, of bare assertions, and thoughtless impudence. It denies facts on the word of a minister, and dogmatizes by authority. 'The force of *dulness* can no farther go:'—but its pertness keeps pace with its dulness. It sets up a lively pretension to safe commonplaces and stale jests; and has an alternate gaiety and gravity of manner:—The *matter* is nothing. Compared with the solemn quackery of the Old or New Times, the ingenious editor is the Merry-Andrew of the political show. The Courier is intended for country readers, the clergy and gentry, who do not like to be disturbed with a *reason* for any thing, but with whom the self-complacent shallowness of the editor passes for a self-evident proof that every thing is as it should be. It is a paper that those who run may read. It asks no thought: it creates no uneasiness. In it the last quarter's assessed taxes are always made good: the harvest is abundant; trade reviving; the Constitution unimpaired; the minister immaculate, and the Monarch the finest gentleman in his dominions. The writer has no idea beyond a certain set of cant phrases, which he repeats by rote, and never puzzles any one by the smallest glimpse of meaning in what he says. This lacquey to the Treasury, in short, puts one in mind of those impudent valets at the doors of great houses—sleek,

saucy, empty, and vulgar—who give short answers, and laugh into the faces of those who come with complaints and grievances to their masters—think their employers great men, and themselves clever fellows—eat, drink, sleep, and let the world *slide*!

The Sun is a paper that *appears* daily, but never *shines*. The editor, who is an agreeable man, has a sinecure of it; and the public trouble their heads just as little about it as he does.

The Traveller is not a new, but a newly-conducted evening paper; which, if it has not much wit or brilliancy, is distinguished by sound judgment, careful information, and constitutional principles.

We really cannot presume to scan the transcendent merits of the Morning Post and Fashionable World—and, in short, the other daily papers must excuse us for saying nothing about them.

Of the Weekly Journalists, Cobbett stands first in power and popularity. Certainly he has earned the latter: would that he abused the former less! We once tried to cast this Antæus to the ground; but the earth-born rose again, and still staggers on, blind or one-eyed, to his remorseless, restless purpose,—sometimes running upon posts and pitfalls—sometimes shaking a country to its centre. It is best to say little about him, and keep out of his way; for he crushes, by his ponderous weight, whomsoever he falls upon; and, what is worse, drags to cureless ruin whatever cause he lays his hands upon to support.

The Examiner stands next to Cobbett in talent; and is much before him in moderation and steadiness of principle. It has also a much greater variety both of tact and subject. Indeed, an agreeable rambling scope and freedom of discussion is so much in the author's way, that the reader is at a loss under what department of the paper to look for any particular topic. A literary criticism, perhaps, insinuates itself under the head of the Political Examiner; and the theatrical critic, or lover of the Fine Arts, is stultified by a *tirade* against the Bourbons. If the dishes are there, it does not much signify in what order they are placed. With the exception of a little egotism and *twaddle*, and flippancy and dogmatism about religion or morals, and mawkishness about firesides and furious Buonapartism, and a vein of sickly sonnet-writing, we suspect the Examiner must be allowed (whether we look to the design or execution of the general run of articles in it) to be the ablest and most respectable of the publications that issue from the weekly press.

The News is also an excellent paper—interspersed with historical and classical knowledge, written in a good taste, and with an excellent spirit. Its circulation is next, we believe, to that of the Observer, which has twice as many murders, assaults, robberies, fires, accidents,

offences, as any other paper, and sells proportionably. Shadows affright the town as well as substances, and ill news fly fast. We apprehend these are the chief of the weekly journals. There are others that have become notorious for qualities that ought to have consigned them long ago to the hands of the common hangman; and some that, by their tameness and indecision, have been struggling into existence ever since their commencement. There is ability, but want of direction, in several of the last.

As to the Weekly Literary Journals, Gazettes, &c. they are a truly insignificant race—a sort of flimsy announcements of favoured publications—insects in letters, that are swallowed up in the larger blaze of full-orbed criticism, and where

'Coming *Reviews* cast their shadows before!'

We cannot condescend to enumerate them. Before we quit this part of our subject, we must add, that Scotland boasts but one original newspaper, the SCOTSMAN, and that newspaper but one subject —Political Economy.—The Editor, however, may be said to be king of it!

Of the *Magazines*, which are a sort of *cater-cousins* to ourselves, we would wish to speak with tenderness and respect. There is the Gentleman's Magazine, at one extremity of the series, and Mr. Blackwood's at the other—and between these there is the European, which is all abroad,—and the Lady's, which is all at home,—and the London, and the Monthly, and the New Monthly—nay, hold; for if all their names were to be written down, one Article or one Number would hardly contain them—so many of them are there, and such antipathy do they hold to each other! For the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE we profess an affection. We like the name, we like the title of the Editor, (Mr. Sylvanus Urban—what a rustic civility is there in it!)—we like the frontispiece of St. John's Gate—a well-preserved piece of useless antiquity, an emblem of the work—we like the table of contents, which promises no more than it performs. There we are sure of finding the last lingering remains of a former age, with the embryo production of the new—some nine days wonder, some forlorn *Hic jacet*—all that is forgotten, or soon to be so—an alligator stuffed, a mermaid, an Egyptian mummy—South-sea inventions, or the last improvement on the spinning-jenny—an epitaph in Pancras Church-yard, the head of Memnon, Lord Byron's Farewell, a Charade by a Young Lady, and Dr. Johnson's dispute with Osborn the bookseller! Oh! happy mixture of indolence and study, of order and disorder! Who, with the Gentleman's Magazine held carelessly in his hand, has not passed minutes, hours, days, in

lackadaisical triumph over *ennui*! Who has not taken it up on parlour window-seats? Who has not ran it slightly through in reading-rooms? If it has its faults, they are those of an agreeable old age; and we could almost wish some ill to those who can say any harm of it.

The Monthly Magazine was originally an improvement on the Gentleman's, and the model on which succeeding ones have been formed. It was a literary Miscellany, variously and ably supported—a sort of repository for the leading topics of conversation of the day; but it has of late degenerated into a register of patents, and an account of the proprietor's philosophy of the universe, in answer to Sir Isaac Newton! Other publications have succeeded to it, and prevailed. Which of these is the best, the London or the New Monthly? We are not the Œdipus to solve this riddle; and indeed it might be difficult, for we believe many of the writers are the same in each. But both contain articles, we will be bold to say, in the form of Essays, Theatrical Criticism, *Jeux-d'esprit*, which may be considered as the flower and cream of periodical literature. To those who judge of books in the lump, by the cubic contents, the binding, or the letters on the back, and who think that all that is conveyed between blue or yellow or orange-tawny covers, must be vain and light as the leaves that flutter round it, we would remark, that many of these fugitive, unowned productions, have been collected, and met with no unfavourable reception, in solid octavo or compact duodecimo. Are there not the quaint and grave subtleties of Elia, the extreme paradoxes of the author of Table-talk, the Confessions of an Opium-eater, the copious tales of Traditional Literature, all from one Magazine? We believe, the agreeable lucubrations of Mr. Geoffrey Crayon also first ventured to meet the public eye in an obscure publication of the same sort—

> 'With a blush,
> Modest as morning, when she coldly eyes
> The youthful Phœbus!'

To say truth, some such ordeal seems almost necessary as a passport to literary reputation. The public like to taste works in the sample, before they swallow them whole. If in the two leading Magazines just alluded to, we do not meet with any great fund of anecdote, with much dramatic display of character, with the same number of successful experiments in the world of letters as at an earlier period of our history, yet the reader may perhaps think the want of these in a great measure compensated by a better sustained tone of general reflection, of mild sentiment, and liberal taste; which we hold, in spite of some

strong exceptions, to be the true characteristics of the age. The fault of the London Magazine is, that it wants a sufficient unity of direction and purpose. There is no particular bias or governing spirit,—which neutralizes the interest. The articles seem thrown into the letter-box, and to come up like blanks or prizes in the lottery —all is in a confused, unconcocted state, like the materials of a rich plum-pudding before it has been well boiled. On the contrary, there may be said to be too much tampering with the management of the New Monthly, till the taste and spirit evaporate. A thing, by being overdone, stands a chance of being insipid—the fastidious may end in languor—the agreeable may cloy by repetition. The Editor, we are afraid, *pets* it too much,—and it is accordingly more remarkable for delicacy than robustness of constitution, and, by being faultless, loses some of its effect.

Over-refinement, however, cannot be charged as the failing of most of our periodical publications. Some are full of polemical orthodoxy —some of methodistical deliration—some inculcate servility, and others preach up sedition—some creep along in a series of dull truisms and stale moralities—while others, more 'lively, audible, and full of vent,' subsist on the great staple of falsehood and personality, and enjoy all the advantages that result from an entire contempt for the restraints of decency, consistency, or candour. There is no pretence, indeed, or concealment of the principles on which such works are conducted: and the reader feels almost as if he were admitted to look in on a club of thorough-going hack authors, in their moments of freedom and exaltation. There is plenty of *slang-wit* going, and some shrewd remark. The pipes and tobacco are laid on the table, with a set-out of oysters and whisky, and bludgeons and sword-sticks in the corner! A profane parody is recited, or a libel on an absent member—and songs are sung in mockery of their former friends and employers. From foul words they get to blows and broken heads; till, drunk with ribaldry, and stunned with noise, they proceed to throw open the windows and abuse the passengers in the street, for their want of religion, morals, and decorum! This is a modern and an enormous abuse, and requires to be corrected.

The illiberality of the Periodical Press is 'the sin that most easily besets it.' We have already accounted for this from the rank and importance it has assumed, which have made it a necessary engine in the hands of party. The abuse, however, has grown to a height that renders it desirable that it should be crushed, if it cannot be corrected; for it threatens to overlay, not only criticism and letters, but to root out all common honesty and common sense from works of the greatest excellence, upon large classes of society. All character,

all decency, the plainest matters of fact, or deductions of reason, are made the sport of a nickname, an inuendo, or a bold and direct falsehood. The continuance of this nuisance rests not with the writers, but with the public; it is they that pamper it into the monster it is; and, in order to put an end to the traffic, the best way is to let them see a little what sort of thing it is which they encourage. Both of the extreme parties in the State, the Ultra-Whigs as well as the Ultra-Royalists, have occasionally trespassed on the borders of this enormity: But it is only the worst part of the Ministerial Press that has had the temptation, the hardihood, or the cowardice to make literature the mere tool and creature of party-spirit; and, in the sacredness of the cause in which it was embarked, to disregard entirely the profligacy of the means. It was pious and loyal to substitute abuse for argument, and private scandal for general argument. He who calumniated his neighbour was a friend to his country. If you could not reply to your opponent's objections, you might caricature his person; if you were foiled by his wit or learning, you might recover your advantage by stabbing his character. The cry of 'No Popery,' or 'the Constitution is in danger,' was an answer to all cavils or scruples. Who would hesitate about the weapons he used to repel an attack on all that was dear and valuable in civil institutions? He who drew off the public attention from a popular statement, by alluding to a slip in the private history of an individual, did well; he who embodied a flying rumour as an undoubted fact, for the same laudable end, did better; and he who invented a palpable falsehood, did best of all. He discovered most invention, most zeal, and most boldness; and received the highest reward for the sacrifice of his time, character, and principle. If the jest took, it was gravely supported; if it was found out, it was well intended: To belie a Whig, a Jacobin, a Republican, or a Dissenter, was doing God and the king good service; at any rate, whether true or false, detected or not, the imputation left a stain behind it, and would be ever after coupled with the name of the individual, so as to disable him, and deter others from doing farther mischief. Knowledge, writing, the press was found to be the great engine that governed public opinion; and the scheme therefore was, to make it recoil upon itself, and act in a retrograde direction to its natural one. Prejudice and power had a provocation to this extreme and desperate mode of defence, in their instinctive jealousy of any opposition to their sentiments or will. They felt that reason was against them—and therefore it was necessary that they should be against reason,—they felt, too, that they could extend impunity to their agents and accomplices, whom they could easily screen from reprisals. Conscious that they were no match for

modern philosophers and reformers in abstract reasoning, they paid off their dread of their talents and principles by a proportionable contempt for their persons, for which no epithets could be too mean or hateful. These were therefore poured out in profusion by their satellites. The nicknames, the cant phrases, too, were all in favour of existing institutions and opinions, and were easily devised in a contest where victory, not truth, was the object. The warfare was therefore turned into this channel from the first; and what passion dictated, a cunning and mercenary policy has continued. The Anti-Jacobin was one of the first that gave the alarm, that set up the war-whoop of reckless slander and vulgar abuse. Here is a specimen.

'Mr. Coleridge having been dishonoured at Cambridge for preaching Deism, has, since that time, left his native country; commenced citizen of the world; left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute. *Ex hoc disce omnes*—his friend Southey and others.'

This is the way in which a man of the most exemplary habits and strict morals was included in the same sentence of reprobation with one of greater genius, though perhaps of more irregular conduct; while the imputations in both cases were impudent falsehoods—probably known to be so, or else founded on some idle report, eagerly caught up and maliciously exaggerated. What has been the effect? Why, that these very persons have, in the end, joined that very pack of hunting-tigers that strove to harass them to death, and now halloo longest and loudest in the chase of blood. Nor was the result, after all, so unnatural as it might at first appear. They saw that there was but one royal road to reputation. The new Temple of Fame was built as an outwork to the rotten boroughs, and the warders were busy on the top of it, pouring down scalding lead and horrible filth on all those who approached, and demanded entrance, without well-attested political credentials. 'The manna' of court favour 'was falling'; and our pilgrims to the land of promise, slowly, reluctantly, but perhaps wisely, got out of the way of it. Who, indeed, was likely to stand, for any length of time, 'the pelting of this pitiless storm'—the precipitation of nicknames from such a height, the thundering down of huge volumes of dirt and rubbish, the ugly blows at character, the flickering jests on personal defects—with the complacent smiles of the great, and the angry shouts of the mob, to say nothing of the Attorney-General's informations, filed *ex officio*, and the well-paid depositions of spies and informers? It was a hard battle to fight. The enemy were well entrenched on the heights of place and power, and skulked behind their ramparts—those whom they assailed were exposed, and on the *pavé*. It was the

forlorn hope of genius and independence struggling for fame and bread; and it is no wonder that many of the candidates *turned tail*, and fled from such fearful odds.

The beauty of it is, that there is generally no reparation or means of redress. From the nature of the imputations, it is frequently impossible distinctly to refute them, or to gain a hearing to the refutation. But if the calumniators are detected and exposed, they plead authority and the *King's privilege*! They assume a natural superiority over you, as if, being of a different party, you were of an inferior species, and justly liable to be tortured, worried, and hunted to death, like any other vermin. They have a right to say what they please of you, to invent or propagate any falsehood or misrepresentation that suits their turn. The greater falsehood, the more merit; the more barefaced the imposture, the more pious the fraud. You are a Whig, a reformer—does not that of itself imply all other crimes and misdemeanours? That being once granted, they have a clear right to heap every other outrage, every other indignity, upon you as a matter of course; and you cannot complain of that which is no more than a commutation of punishment. You are an enthusiast in the cause of liberty: does it not follow that you must be a bad poet? You are against Ministers; is it to be supposed that you can write a line of prose without repeated offences against sense and grammar? If it be once admitted that you are an opposition writer of some weight and celebrity, it follows, of course, that the government scribbler should get a *carte blanche* to fill up your character and pretensions, life, parentage, and education. Your mind and morals are, in justice, *deodands* to the Crown, and should be handed over to the court critic to be dissected without mercy, like the body of a condemned malefactor. The disproportion between the fact and the allegation only points the *moral* the more strongly against you; for the odiousness of your conduct, in differing with men in office and their sycophants, is such, that no colours can be black enough to paint it; and if you are not really guilty of all the petty vices and absurdities imputed to you, it is plain that you ought to be so, to answer to their theory, and as a *fiction* in loyalty, for the credit of church and state. You are a bad subject, they pretend: that you are a bad writer and bad man, is a self-evident consequence that will be at once admitted by all the respectable and well-disposed part of the community. You are entitled, in short, neither to justice nor mercy: and he who *volunteers* to deprive you of a livelihood or your good name by any means, however atrocious or dastardly, is entitled to the thanks of his own country.

One of their most common expedients is, to strew their victim

over and over with epithets of abuse, and to trust to the habitual association between words and things for the effect of their application. There was an instance of this, some little time ago, in a well-known paper, with which we shall exemplify our doctrine. It was in reference to the assault made on Sir Hudson Lowe by young Las Casas.

'A French lad, of the name of Las Casas, the son of one of Buonaparte's Counts, waylaid Sir Hudson Lowe in the street on Tuesday, and struck him, because Sir Hudson did his duty properly, as an English Governor, at St. Helena, and as keeper of the *miscreant* of whom he had the charge. The Chronicle put forth yesterday a letter without an address, said to be from the boy himself, signed Baron ——, something. In this he confesses the assault, which, in default of other witnesses, will substantiate the fact, and consign him, *as soon as the thief-takers can catch him*, no doubt to the pleasing recreation of the tread-mill for a given time.'

We pass over the terms 'miscreant,'—'fellow,' &c.; but there is a refinement, in one part of this paragraph, worth notice. It is said, as if casually, that the 'thief-takers were after him.' What! had he been accused of picking pockets, of shop-lifting, or petty larceny? No; but though the fact was known to be quite different, the feeling, it was thought, would be the same. His offence would be transferred, by the operation of this choice expression, to the class of misdemeanors which thief-takers are employed to look after; and thus young Las Casas, for resenting the unworthy treatment of his father and old master, has an indirect imputation fastened on him, by which he is confounded in the imagination with felons and housebreakers, and other persons for whom the 'tread-mill' is a suitable punishment! Such is the force of words—the power of prejudice—and the means of poisoning public opinion.

Take another illustration in a native instance. A man of classical taste and attainments appears to be editor of an Opposition Journal. He publishes (it is the fault of his stars) an elegant and pathetic poem. The first announcement of the work, in a Ministerial publication, sets out with a statement, that the author has lately been relieved from Newgate—which gives a felon-like air to the production, and makes it necessary for the fashionable reader to perform a sort of quarantine against it, as if it had the gaol-infection. It is declared by another critic, in the same pay, to be unreadable from its insipidity, and afterwards, by the same critic, to be highly pernicious and inflammatory—a slight contradiction, but no matter! This, and fifty other inconsistencies, would all go down, provided they were equally malignant and unblushing. The writer may

contradict himself as often as he pleases: if he only speaks *against* the work, his criticism is sound and orthodox. Nor is it only obnoxious writers on politics themselves, but all their friends and acquaintance, or those whom they casually notice, that come under this sweeping anathema. It is proper to make a clear stage. The friends of Caesar must not be suspected of an amicable intercourse with patriotic and incendiary writers. A young poet comes forward: an early and favourable notice appears of some boyish verses of his in the Examiner, independently of all political opinion. That alone decides his fate; and from that moment he is set upon, pulled in pieces, and hunted into his grave by the whole venal crew in full cry after him. It was crime enough that he dared to accept praise from so disreputable a quarter. He should have thrown back his bounty in the face of the donor, and come with his manuscript in his hand, to have poetical justice dealt out to him by the unbiassed author of the Baviad and Mæviad! His tenderness and beauties would then have been exalted with *faint* praise, instead of being mangled and torn to pieces with ruthless, unfeeling rage; his faults would have been gently hinted at, and attributed to youth and inexperience; and his profession, instead of being made the subject of loud ribald jests by vile buffoons, would have been introduced to enhance the merit of his poetry. But a different fate awaited poor Keats! His fine fancy and powerful invention were too obvious to be treated with mere neglect; and as he had not been ushered into the world with the court-stamp upon him, he was to be crushed as a warning to genius how it keeps company with honesty, and as a sure means of inoculating the ingenuous spirit and talent of the country with timely and systematic servility! We sometimes think that writers are alarmed at the praises that even *we* bestow upon them, lest it should preclude them from the approbation of the authorized sources of fame!

This system thus pursued is intended to amount, and in fact does amount, to a prohibition to authors to write, and to the public to read any works that have not the Government mark upon them. The professed object is to gag the one, and hoodwink the others, and to persuade the world that all talent, taste, elegance, science, liberality and virtue, are confined to a few hack-writers and their employers. One would think the public would resent this gross attempt to impose on their understandings, and encroach on their liberty of private judgment. When a gentleman is reading a new work, of which he is beginning to form a favourable opinion, is it to be borne that he should have it snatched out of his hands, and tossed into the dirt by a retainer of the *literary police*? Can he be supposed to pick it up

afterwards, either to read himself, or to lend it to a friend, sullied and disfigured as it is? But the truth we fear is, that the public, besides their participation in the same prejudices, are timid, indolent, and easily influenced by a little swaggering and an air of authority. They like to amuse their leisure with reading a new work; and if they have more leisure, have no objection to fill it up with listening to an abuse of the writer. If they approve of candour and equity in the abstract, they do not disapprove of a little scandal and tittle-tattle by the by. They take in a disgusting publication, because it is 'amusing and clever'—that is, full of incredible assertions which make them stare, and of opprobrious epithets applied to high characters, which, by their smartness and incongruity, operate as a lively stimulus to their ordinary state of ennui. This happens on the Sunday morning; and the rest of the week passes in unravelling the imposture, and expressing a very edifying mixture of wonder and indignation at it. Such a paper was detected, not long ago, in the fabrication of a low falsehood against a most respectable gentleman, who was said to have proposed a dinner and rump and dozen, in triumph over the death of Lord Castlereagh. This was said to have taken place in a public room, so that the exposure of the falsehood was immediate and complete. Not long before, it put a leading question to a popular member for the city, as if some ill-conduct of his had caused his father's death: it was shown that this gentleman's father had died before he was born! Is it to be supposed that the writer knew the facts? We should rather think not. He probably neither knew nor cared any thing about them. It was his vocation to hazard the dark insinuation, and to trust to chance and the malice of mankind for its success. The blow was well meant, though it failed. But was it not a blow to the paper itself? Alas, no; it still blunders on; and the public gape after it, half in fear half in indignation. It slanders a virtuous lady; it insults the misfortunes of a Noble House; it rakes up the infirmities of the dead; it taints (for whatever it touches it contaminates) the unborn. No matter. They or their family had sinned in being Whigs—and there are still men in England, it would appear, who think that this is the way by which differences of opinion should be revenged or prevented.

It used to be the boast of English gentlemen, that their political contentions were conducted in a spirit, not merely of perfect fairness, but of mutual courtesy and urbanity; and that, even among the lower orders, quarrels were governed by a law of honour and chivalry, which proscribed all base advantages, and united all the spectators against him by whom *a foul blow* was given or attempted. We trust that this spirit is not yet extinguished among us; and that it will

speedily assert itself, by trampling under foot that base system of mean and malignant defamation, by which our Periodical Press has recently been polluted and disgraced. We would avoid naming works that desire nothing so much as notoriety; but it is but too well known, that the work of intimidation and deceit, of cruel personality and audacious fabrication, has been carried on, for several years, in various periodical publications, daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly,—that it has been urged with unrelenting eagerness in the metropolis, in spite of the public discountenance of the leaders of the party which it disgraces by its pretended support; and then propagated into various parts of the country, for purposes of local annoyance. It is equally well known and understood too, that this savage system of bullying and assassination is no longer pursued from the impulse of angry passions or furious prejudices, but on a cold-blooded mercenary calculation of the profits which idle curiosity, and the vulgar appetite for slander, may enable its authors to derive from it. Where this is to stop, we do not presume to conjecture,—unless the excess leads to the remedy, and the distempered appetite of the public be surfeited, and so die. This is by no means an unlikely, and, we hope, may be a speedy consummation. In the mean time, the extent and extravagance of the abuse has already had the effect, not only of making individual attacks less painful or alarming, but even, in many cases, of pointing out to the judicious the proper objects of their gratitude and respect. For ourselves, at least, we do not hesitate to acknowledge, that, when we find an author savagely and perseveringly attacked by this gang of literary retainers, we immediately feel assured, not only that he is a good writer, but an honest man; and if a statesman is once selected as the butt of outrageous abuse in the same quarter, we consider it as a satisfactory proof that he has lately rendered some signal service to his country, or aimed a deadly blow at corruption.

We have put ourselves out of breath with this long lecture on the great opprobrium of our periodical literature,—and dare not now go on to the ticklish chapter of *Reviews*. We do not, however, by any means renounce the design; and hope one day to be enabled to resume it, and to astonish our readers with a full and ingenuous account of our own merits and demerits, and those of our rivals.

LANDOR'S IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

Vol. xl.] [*March* 1824.

This work is as remarkable an instance as we have lately met with of the strength and weakness of the human intellect. It displays considerable originality, learning, acuteness, terseness of style, and force of invective—but it is spoiled and rendered abortive throughout by an utter want of temper, of self-knowledge, and decorum. Mr. Landor's mind is far from barren in feeling or in resources; but over the natural, and (what might be) the useful growth of these, there every where springs up a luxuriant crop of caprice, dogmatism, extravagance, intolerance, quaintness, and most ludicrous arrogance,—like the red and blue flowers in corn, that, however they may dazzle the passenger's eye, choke up the harvest, and mock the hopes of the husbandman. We are not ignorant of the school to which our author belongs; and could name other writers who, in the course of a laborious life, and in productions numerous and multiform—some recent and suited to the times, some long and luckily forgotten,—in odes, inscriptions, madrigals, epics,—in essays, histories and reviews, —have run into as many absurdities, and as many extremes: But never did we see, bound up in the same volume, close-packed, and pointed with all the significance of style, the same number of contradictions, staring one another in the face, and quarrelling for the precedence. Mr. Landor's book is a perfect 'institute and digest' of inconsistency: it is made up of mere antipathies in nature and in reasoning. It is a *chef-d'œuvre* of self-opinion and self-will, strangling whatever is otherwise sound and excellent in principle, defacing whatever is beautiful in style and matter.

If it be true (as has been said) that

'Great wits to madness nearly are allied,'

we know few writers that have higher or more unequivocal pretensions in this way than the author of the 'Imaginary Conversations.' Would it be believed, that, trampling manfully on all history and tradition, he speaks of Tiberius as a *man of sentiment*, who retired to Capri merely to indulge a tender melancholy on the death of a beloved wife: and will have it that Nero was a most humane, amiable, and deservedly popular character—not arguing the points as doubtful or susceptible of question, but assuming them, *en passant*, as most absolute and peremptory conclusions—as if whatever was contrary to common sense and common feeling carried conviction on the face of it? In the same page he assures us, with the same oracular tran-

quillity, that the conflagration of Rome, and the great fire of London, were both wise and voluntary measures, arising from the necessity of purifying the cities after sickness, and leaving no narrow streets in their centres! and on turning the leaf, it is revealed to us, that 'there is nothing in Rome, *or in the world*, equal to—the circus in Bath!' He spells the words *foreign* and *sovereign*, 'foren' and 'sovran,' and would go to the stake, or send others there, to prove the genuineness of these orthographies, which he adopts on the authority of Milton; and yet he abuses Buonaparte for being the ape of Antiquity, and talking about Miltiades. He cries up Mr. Locke as 'the most *elegant* of English prose writers,' for no other reason (as we apprehend) than that he has often been considered as the least so; and compares Dr. Johnson's style to 'that article of dress which the French have lately made peace with' (a pair of pantaloons), 'divided into two parts, equal in length, breadth, and substance, with a protuberance before and behind.' He pronounces sentence upon the lost works of two ancient writers, Democritus and Menander, that the former would be worth all the philosophical remains of antiquity, and the latter not be worth having,—precisely because he can know nothing about the matter; the will to decide superseding the necessity of any positive ground of opinion, and the spirit of contradiction standing him in lieu of all other conviction. Boileau, according to our critic, had not a particle of sense, wit, or taste: Pope, to be sure, was of a different opinion—and we take it to be just possible that Boileau would have thought himself indemnified by the homage of the one for the scorn of the other! He speaks of Pitt as a poor creature, who did not see an inch before him, and of Fox as a charlatan; and says modestly in reference to some history he is writing, that he trusts 'Posterity will not confound him with the Coxes and the Foxes of the age.' It would be rather too much in his own manner perhaps to say, that no one who could write this sentence, will ever write a history—but we hazard the conjecture notwithstanding—and leave it to time to decide. He announces that Alfieri was the greatest man in Europe, though his greatness has not yet been generally acknowledged. This, however, is exactly the reason that Mr. Landor vouches for it, because whether he was so or not, rests solely on his *ipse dixit*. It is a fine thing to be one of the oracles of Fame! With equal modesty and candour he declares literary men to be as much superior to lords and kings as these last are to the meanest of their vassals. In a dialogue between Prince Maurocordato and General Colocotroni, he wishes the Greeks to substitute the bow for the use of fire-arms; and to this experimental crotchet, we suspect, he would sacrifice the Greek cause,—or any

other. He has a hit at Lord Byron, and another at Mr. Thomas Moore, and a compliment to Lady Morgan. It is hard to say which he hates most—the English Government or the French people—Buonaparte or the Bourbons. He considers Buonaparte as a miracle, only because no man with so little talent ever gained such an ascendancy; and certainly with the qualifications our author allows him, he must have dealt with the Devil to do what he did; and, as if determined to conciliate no party and have all the world against him, he takes care to inform the reader at the same time, that in the most remarkable English victory in the last fifty years, 'the prudence and skill of the commander (Wellington) were altogether wanting.' He brings it as a proof of Buonaparte's stupidity, that 'he knew nothing of judicial astrology, *which hath certain laws assigned to it*, and fancied he could unite it with atheism, as easily as the iron crown with the lilies.' He tells us, that 'he did his utmost in pursuing this tyrant to death, recommending and insisting on nothing less:' but that now he is dead, 'he is sorry for it.' So hot, indeed, is he on this scent, that he is for bringing Louis XIV. to life, in order to have him 'carted to condign punishment in the *Place de Grêve*, or at Tyburn.' We cannot understand this coincidence in the proposed fate of two persons so different; nor how Mr. Landor should call 'the battle of Waterloo the most glorious to the victors since that of Leuctra,' while he recommends a resort to tyrannicide, and points out its objects, to get rid of the legitimate consequences of that battle; nor why he should strike 'his marble table with his palm,' or call his country names—'degenerate Albion,'—'recreant slave,' &c. &c. for not aiding 'in the cause of freedom in Greece,' when she has his thanks and praise for putting down the principle, at one blow, all over the world! Kings and nations, however, do not change like whiffling politicians. The one are governed by their prejudices, the other by their interests;—Mr. Landor and his friends by the opinion of the moment, by a fit of the spleen, by the first object that stirs their vanity or their resentment.

The work before us is an edifying example of the spirit of Literary Jacobinism,—flying at all game, running *a-muck* at all opinions, and at continual cross-purposes with its own. To avoid misconstruction, however, we should add, that we mean by this term, that despotism of the mind, which only emancipates itself from authority and prejudice, to grow impatient of every thing like an appearance of opposition, and to domineer over and dictate its sudden, crude, violent, and varying opinions, to the rest of the world. This spirit admits neither of equal nor superior, follower nor precursor: 'it travels in a road so narrow where but one goes abreast.' It claims a monopoly

of sense, wit, and wisdom. To agree with it is an impertinence: to differ from it a crime. It tramples on old prejudices: it is jealous of new pretensions. It seizes with avidity on all that is startling or obnoxious in opinions, and when they are countenanced by any one else, discards them as no longer fit for its use. Thus persons of this temper affect atheism by way of distinction; and if they can succeed in bringing it into fashion, become orthodox again, in order not to be with the vulgar. Their creed is at the mercy of every one who assents to, or who contradicts it. All their ambition, all their endeavour is, to seem wiser than the whole world besides. If they are forced to adopt a *commonplace*, they exaggerate it into a paradox, by their manner of stating it. So, in the 'Imaginary Conversations,' we learn, that 'for every honest Italian, there are,' not ten, or a hundred, but 'a hundred thousand honest Englishmen.' They hate whatever falls short of, whatever goes beyond, their favourite theories. In the one case they hurry on before to get the start of you; in the other, they suddenly turn back, to hinder you, and defeat themselves. It is not the love of truth, or of mankind, that urges them on—but the love of distinction; and they run into every extreme, and every folly, in order to indulge their overweening self-complacency and affected singularity.

An inordinate, restless, incorrigible self-love, is the key to all their actions and opinions, extravagancies, and meannesses, servility and arrogance. Whatever sooths and pampers this they applaud; whatever wounds or interferes with it they utterly and vindictively abhor. If an author is read and admired, they decry him; and if he is obscure or forgotten, or unintelligible, they extol him to the skies. But if they should succeed in bringing him into notice, and fixing him in the firmament of fame, they soon find out that there are spots in the sun, and draw the cloud of envy over his merits. A general is with them a hero, if he is unsuccessful or a traitor; if he is a conqueror in the cause of liberty, or a martyr to it, he is a poltroon. Whatever is doubtful, remote, visionary in philosophy, or wild and dangerous in politics, they fasten upon eagerly, 'recommending and insisting on nothing less;'—reduce the one to demonstration, the other to practice, and they turn their backs upon their own most darling schemes, and leave them in the lurch immediately. With them everything is *in posse*, nothing *in esse*. The reason is, that they would have others take all their opinions implicitly from their infallibility: if a thing has grounds or evidence of its own to rest upon, so that they are no longer called in like prophets, to vouch for its truth, this is a sufficient excuse for them to discard it, and to look out for new *terræ incognitæ* to exercise their quackery and second-sight upon.

So they cry up a *protegé* of their own, that nobody has ever heard of, as a prodigious genius, while he does nothing to justify the character they give of him, and exists only through the breath of their nostrils;—let him come forward in his own person, encouraged by their applause, and convince the world that he has something in him, and they immediately set to work to prove that he has borrowed all his ideas from them,—and is besides a person of bad moral character! They are of the church-militant; they pull down, but they will not build up, nor let any one else do it. They devote themselves to a cause, to a principle while it is in doubt or struggling for existence;—let it succeed, and they become jealous of it, and revile and hate the man by whom it has risen, or by whom it stands, like a triumphal arch over the ruins of barbaric thrones! For any one to do more for a cause than they have done, to be more talked of than they are, is a piece of presumption not hastily to be forgiven.

We consider the spirit which we have here attempted to analyze, as maintained in a state of higher concentration in this work than in any other we have for some time seen. Some of Mr. Southey's lucubrations contain pretty good samples of it; but in him it is 'dashed and brewed' with other elements. He has been to court, is one of a *firm*, and mixes something of the cant of methodism with his effusions. But Mr. Landor keeps a *private still* of his own, where the unrectified spirit remains in its original vigour and purity, —cold indeed, and without the frothy effervescence of its first running, but unabated in activity, strength and virulence. We have pointed out what we regard as the 'damning sin' of this work; and having thus entered our protest, and guarded the reader against its mischievous tendency, we hold ourselves at liberty to extract what amusement or instruction we can from it. We are far from wishing to represent our author as 'to every good word and work reprobate.' On the contrary, we think he is naturally prone to what is right, but diverted from it by the infirmity we speak of. He has often much strength of thought, and vigour and variety of style; and we should be mortified, indeed, and deserving of mortification, if the petty provocation he has attempted to give us, could deter us from doing him that justice. He is excellent, whenever excellence is compatible with singularity. It is the fault of the school to which he belongs, not that they are blind to truth, or indifferent to good—but truth to be welcome must be a rare discovery of their own; they only woo her as a youthful bride; and are too soon satiated with the possession of what they desire, out of fickleness, or as the gloss of novelty wears off—or sue out a divorce from jealousy, and a dread of rivals in the favour of their former mistress!

This was the reason, whatever might be the pretext, why the same set of persons raised such an outcry against Buonaparte, and *alone* insisted on his assassination. They had no great objection to what he was doing—but they could not bear to think that he had done more than they had ever dreamt of. While they were building castles in the air, he gave law to Europe. He carved out with the sword, what they had only traced with the pen. 'Never,' says Mr. Landor, 'had been such good laws so well administered over a considerable portion of Europe. The services he rendered to society were great, manifold, and extensive.' But these services were hateful in their eyes—because he aggrandized himself in performing them. The power he wielded, the situation he occupied, excited their envy, much more than the stand he made against the common enemy, their gratitude. They were ready enough at all times to pull down kings, but they hated him worse who trampled, by his own might, on their necks—as more rivals to themselves, as running in the same race, and going farther in it. Any service, in short, any triumph is odious in their eyes, be it over whom, or in favour of what it will. Their great idol now is Washington; but this is because he acted upon comparatively a narrow theatre, and belongs to a people whose greatness is rather prospective than present; and also, because there is something in his mechanical habits and cold formality that appeases their irritable spleen.

The Dialogues are thirty-six in number, and on a great variety of curious and interesting topics. The style of the period is sometimes well imitated, without being mimicked; and a good deal of character, and sometimes of humour, is thrown into the tone of the different speakers. We give the following, between Roger Ascham and Lady Jane Gray, as one of the most pleasing, and as a relief to the severity and harshness of our introductory speculation.

'*Ascham.* Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state: thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it so: submitt[1] in thankfulness. Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a great degree, is inspired by honour in a greater: it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection, but in the most exalted minds . . . Alas! alas!

'*Jane.* What aileth my virtuous Ascham? what is amiss? why do I tremble?

'*Ascham.* I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, although

[1] One of Mr. Landor's refinements in spelling.

thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blinded thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omnipotence, but it is because thy tender heart having always leaned affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil. I once persuaded thee to reflect much; let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflection, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and steadfastly on what is under and before thee.

'*Jane.* I have well bethought me of all my duties: O how extensive they are! what a goodly and fair inheritance! But tell me, wouldst thou command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Polybius? the others I do resign unto thee: they are good for the arbour and for the gravel walk: but leave unto me, I beseech thee, my friend and father, leave unto me, for my fire-side and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

'*Ascham.* Read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed! Thou spotless, undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well! These are the men for men: these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures, O Jane, whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom . . . Mind thou thy husband.

'*Jane.* I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection. I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget, at times, unworthy supplicant! the prayers I should have offered for myself. O never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband in the most trying duties.

'*Ascham.* Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous; but time will harden him: time must harden even thee, sweet Jane! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition.

'*Jane.* He is contented with me and with home.

'*Ascham.* Ah, Jane, Jane! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

'*Jane.* He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him. I will read them to him every evening: I will open new worlds to him, richer than those discovered by the Spaniard: I will conduct him to treasures . . . O what treasures! . . . On which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

'*Ascham.* Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his every thing that love and poetry have invented; but watch him well, sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheeks; and if ever he meditate on power, go, toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse. Teach him to live unto God and unto thee: and he will discover that women, like

the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.' II. 54.

We must say we think this Dialogue is written *con amore*. It is imbued with the very spirit of some of those old writers, where 'all is conscience and tender heart.' Mr. Landor's over-anxious mind reposes on the innocence of youth and beauty, on the simplicity of his subject, on the reverence due and willingly paid, because silently exacted, to age and antiquity! Even the quaintness, the abruptness, the wanderings and the puerility, are delightful, and happily characteristic. While we are in good humour with our author, we will extract another conversation of the same period, and distinguished by the same vein of felicitous imitation, in the sentiment of which we also go along with him heart and hand,—that between Elizabeth and Burleigh, on the trite subject of Spenser's pension.

'*Elizabeth*. I advise thee again, Churlish Cecil, how that our Edmund Spenser, whom thou calledst most uncourteously a whining whelp, hath good and solid reason for his complaint. God's blood! shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffleth the smock over my head, or the lord that steddieth my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh to my buck-hounds lest they be mangy, be holden by me in higher esteem and estate than he who hath placed me among the bravest of past times, and will as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest in the future?

'*Cecil*. Your highness must remember he carouseth fully for such deserts . . . A hundred pounds a year of unclipt monies, and a butt of canary wine.[1]

'*Elizabeth*. The monies are not enow to sustain a pair of grooms and a pair of palfreys, and more wine hath been drunken in my presence at a feast. The monies are given to such men, that they may not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occupation; and the canary, that they may entertain such promising Wits as court their company and converse; and that in such manner there may be

[1] 'Calculating the prices of provisions, and the increase of taxes, the poet-laureate, in the time of Elizabeth, had about four times as much as at present: so that Cecil spoke reasonably, Elizabeth royally.'—*Note by the Author*.

We were unwilling to suppress this hint for the increase of the laureate's salary, considering how worthily the situation is filled at present; and Mr. Landor's recommendation must be peremptory at court. We observe that our author's spelling of the word 'laureate' is the same as Mr. Southey's. Is the latter indebted to the same source for the learned Orientalism of *Tâtar* for Tartar? What a significant age we live in! How many extravagant conclusions and false assumptions lurk under that one orthoepy! He who innovates in things where custom alone is concerned, must be proof against its suggestions in all other cases; and when reason and fancy come into play, must indeed be a law to himself.

alway in our land a succession of these heirs of Fame. He hath written, not indeed with his wonted fancifulness, nor in learned and majestical language, but in homely and rustic wise, some verses which have moved me; and haply the more so, inasmuch as they demonstrate to me that his genius hath been dampened by his adversities. Read them.

'*Cecil.* How much is lost when neither heart nor eye
Rose-winged Desire or fabling Hope deceives;
When boyhood with quick throb hath ceased to spy
The dubious apple in the yellow leaves;

'When, springing from the turf where youth reposed,
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;
When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more.

'*Elizabeth.* The said Edmund hath also furnished unto the weaver at Arras, John Blaquieres, on my account, a description for some of his cunningest wenches to work at, supplied by mine own self, indeed as far as the subject-matter goes, but set forth by him with figures and fancies, and daintily enough bedecked. I could have wished he had thereunto joined a fair comparison between Dian . . . no matter . . . he might perhaps have fared the better for it . . . but poet's wits, God help them! when did they ever sit close about them? Read the poesy, not over-rich, and concluding very awkwardly and meanly.

'*Cecil.* Where forms the lotus, with its level leaves
And solid blossoms, many floating isles,
What heavenly radiance swift-descending cleaves
The darksome wave! unwonted beauty smiles

'On its pure bosom, on each bright-eyed flower,
On every nymph, and twenty sate around . . .
Lo! 'twas Diana . . . from the sultry hour
Hither she fled, nor fear'd she sight nor sound.

'Unhappy youth, whom thirst and quiver-reeds
Drew to these haunts, whom awe forbade to fly,
Three faithful dogs before him rais'd their heads,
And watched and wonder'd at that fixed eye.

'Forth sprang his favorite . . . with her arrow-hand
Too late the Goddess hid what hand may hide,
Of every nymph and every reed complain'd,
And dashed upon the bank the waters wide.

'On the prone head and sandal'd feet they flew—
Lo! slender hoofs and branching horns appear!
The last marred voice not even the favorite knew,
But bayed and fastened on the upbraiding deer.

'Far be, chaste Goddess, far from me and mine,
The stream that tempts thee in the summer noon!
Alas, that 'vengeance dwells with charms divine . . .

'*Elizabeth.* Psha! give me the paper: I forwarned thee how it ended . . . pitifully, pitifully.

'*Cecil.* I cannot think otherwise than that the undertaker of the aforecited poesy hath choused your Highness; for I have seen painted, I know not where, the identically same Dian, with full as many nymphs, as he calls them, and more dogs. So small a matter as a page of poesy shall never stir my choler, nor twitch my purse-string.

'*Elizabeth.* I have read in Plinius and Mela of a runlet near Dodona, which kindled by approximation an unlighted torch, and extinguished a lighted one. Now, Cecil, I desire no such a jetty to be celebrated as the decoration of my court: in simpler words, which your gravity may more easily understand, I would not, from the fountain of Honour, give lustre to the dull and ignorant, deadening and leaving in 'cold obstruction' the lamp of literature and genius. I ardently wish my reign to be remembered: if my actions were different from what they are, I should as ardently wish it to be forgotten. Those are the worst of suicides, who voluntarily and prepensely stab or suffocate their fame, when God has commanded them to stand up on high for an ensample. We call him parricide who destroys the author of his existence: tell me, what shall we call him who casts forth to the dogs and birds of prey, its most faithful propagator and most firm support? The parent gives us few days and sorrowful; the poet many and glorious: the one (supposing him discreet and kindly) best reproves our faults; the other best remunerates our virtues. A page of poesy is a little matter—be it so—but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble—it shall win to it full many a proud and flighty one, that even chivalry and manly comeliness cannot touch. I may shake titles and dignities by the dozen from my breakfast-board—but I may not save those upon whose heads I shake them from rottenness and oblivion. This year they and their sovran dwell together, next year they and their beagle. Both have names, but names perishable. The keeper of my privy seal is an earl—what then? The keeper of my poultry-yard is a Cæsar. In

honest truth, a name given to a man is no better than a skin given to him: what is not natively his own, falls off and comes to nothing. I desire in future to hear no contempt of penmen, unless a depraved use of the pen shall have so cramped them, as to incapacitate them for the sword and for the council-chamber. If Alexander was the Great, what was Aristoteles who made him so? who taught him every art and science he knew, except three, those of drinking, of blaspheming, and of murdering his bosom-friends. Come along: I will bring thee back again nearer home. Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights, and never eke out the substance of a stanza; but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and gentle, —he complains of Fortune, not of Elizabeth,—of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved, so help me God, he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him these twelve silver-spoons, with the apostols on them, gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom;—besides which, set open before him with due reverence this bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God towards those who waited in patience for his blessing; and this pair of cremisin silken hosen, which thou knowest I have worne only thirteen months, taking heed that the heelpiece be put into good and sufficient restauration at my sole charges, by the Italian woman at Charing-Cross.' I. 91.

We think that this is very pleasant and brave 'fooling,' and that our author has hit off the familiar pedantic tone of the Maiden Queen well. The sentiment with which Elizabeth seems in the foregoing Dialogue, to regard the Muses as among her Maids of Honour, and the patronage she is ready to extend to poets as the most agreeable and permanent class of court-chroniclers, must be considered as characteristic of the person and the age, and not attributed to the author. *His* literary *fierté* is quite in the tone of the present age, nor can he be suspected of representing poets as destined to nothing higher than to be danglers upon the great. He has put his opinion on this subject beyond a doubt. In a very different style, he makes Salomon, the Florentine Jew, thus address Alfieri, the tragic poet.

'Be contented, Signor Conte, with the glory of our first great dramatist, and neglect altogether any inferior one. Why vex and torment yourself about the French? They buzz and are troublesome while they are swarming; but the master will soon hive them. *Is*

the whole nation worth the worst of your tragedies? All the present race of them, all the creatures in the world which excite your indignation, will lie in the grave, while young and old are clapping their hands or beating their bosoms at your *Bruto Primo*. Consider, to make one step further, that kings and emperours should, in your estimation, be but as grasshoppers and beetles,—let them consume a few blades of your clover, without molesting them, without bringing them to crawl on you and claw you. The difference between them and men of genius is almost as great, as between men of genius and those higher Intelligences who act in immediate subordination to the Almighty. Yes, I assert it, without flattery and without fear, the Angels are not higher above mortals, than you are above the proudest that trample on them.'

We think Mr. Landor's friend, the poet-laureate, cannot do better than turn this passage into hexameter verse, and present it as his next Birth-day Ode. The author's dislike of the French has here inspired him with a contempt for emperors and kings, and with an admiration for men of genius. He sets out with a fit of the spleen, rises to the sublime, and ends in the mock-heroic. We do not soar so high. Without pretending to settle the precedence between poets and any higher order of Intelligences, we certainly think they have something better to do than to varnish over state-puppets, and hold them up to the gaze of posterity. Yet this menial use of their talents seems to have been the highest which even persons like Elizabeth formerly contemplated in their patronage of them. If Spenser had merely distinguished himself by his flattering and fanciful portraits of his royal mistress, we should think no more of him now than of 'the lady that tied on her garter.' He has entitled himself to our gratitude, by introducing us into the presence of his mistress, Fancy, the true Faery Queen, 'the fairest princess under sky;' and showing us the purple lights of Love and Beauty reflected in his tremulous page, like evening skies in pure and still waters. What is it that the poets of elder times have indeed done for us, besides paying awkward compliments and writing fulsome dedications to their patrons? They spread out a brighter heaven above our heads, a softer and a greener earth beneath our feet. They do in truth 'paint the lily,' they 'throw a perfume on the violet, and add another hue unto the rainbow.' From them the murmuring stream borrows its thoughtful music; they steep the mountain's head in azure, and the nodding grove waves in visionary grandeur in their page. Solitude becomes more solitary, silence eloquent, joy extatic; they lend wings to Hope, and put a heart into all things. Poetry hangs its lamp on high, shedding sweet influence; and not an object in nature is seen,

unaccompanied by the sound of 'famous poets' verse.' They add another spring to man's life, breathe the balm of immortality into the soul, and by their aid, a dream and a glory is ever around us. Queen Elizabeth ordered Shakespear to *continue* Falstaff. He has indeed been *continued*; for he has come down to us, and is living to this day! Otway would have thought it a great thing to have had *Venice Preserved* patronised, and a box taken by a dutchess on the night of its first appearance. But is this 'the spur that the clear spirit doth raise?' Is it for this that we envy him, or that so many would have wished like him to live, even though doomed as the consequence, like him to die? No, but for the sake of those thousand hearts that have melted with Belvidera's sorrows, for those tears that have streamed from bright eyes, and that young and old have shed so many thousand times over her fate! This is the spur to Fame, this is the boast of letters, that they are the medium through which whatever we feel and think (that we take most pride and interest in) is imparted and lives in the brain, and throbs in the bosoms of a countless multitude. We breathe the thoughts of others as they breathe ours, like common air, in spite of the distance of place, and the lapse of time. Mind converses everywhere with mind, and we drink of knowledge as of a river. We ourselves (Mr. Landor will excuse the egotism of the transition) once took shelter from a shower of rain in a ruined hovel in the Highlands, where we found an old shepherd apparently regardless of the storm and of his flock, reading a number of the Edinburgh Review! Need we own that this little incident inspired us with a feeling of almost poetical vanity? From that time the blue and yellow covers seemed to take a tinge from the humid arch, that spanned the solitude before us, and our thoughts were commingled with the elements!

The *Conversation between Oliver Cromwell and Walter Noble* on the beheading of Charles I., displays a good deal of the blunt knavery of old Nol, and a mixture of honour and honesty in the old Roundhead. We here also find some touches that illustrate Mr. Landor's political views. Thus Cromwell is made to say, 'I abominate and detest kingship;'—to which Noble answers—'I abominate and detest hangmanship; but in certain stages of society, both are necessary. Let them go together, we want neither now.' The same dramatic appreciation of the intellect of the speakers, and of the literary tone of the age, appears in the *Eighth Conversation, between King James I. and Isaac Casaubon*; and in many of the others, whether relating to ancient or modern times. The verisimilitude does not arise from a studied use of peculiar phrases, or an exaggeration of peculiar opinions, but the writer seems to be well versed in the productions and

characters of the individuals he brings upon the stage, and the adaptation takes place unconsciously and without any apparent effort. A remarkable instance of this occurs in the dialogue between Ann Boleyn and Henry VIII., into which the rough, boisterous, voluptuous, cruel and yet gamesome character of that monarch, whose gross and pampered selfishness has but one parallel in the British annals, is transfused with all the truth and spirit of history—or of the Author of Waverley! In the *Fourth Dialogue* 'between Professor Porson and Mr. Southey,' we meet with an assertion which we think Mr. Landor would hardly have hazarded in the lifetime of the former, and to which we cannot assent, even to show our candour. 'Take up,' says the Laureate, 'a poem of Wordsworth's, *and read it*; I would rather say, read them all; and knowing that a mind like yours must grasp closely what comes within it, I will then appeal to you whether any poet of our country, since Shakespear, has exerted a greater variety of powers, with less strain and less ostentation.' Some persons (we do not know whether the poet himself is of the number) have, we understand, compared Mr. Wordsworth to Milton; but we did not expect ever to see a resemblance suggested between him and Shakespeare. If ever two men were the antipodes of each other, they are so; and even this we think is paying compliment enough to Mr. Wordsworth. We are also of opinion, in the very teeth of the *dictum* of the brother bard, that let his other merits be what they may, no English writer of any genius has shown *less* variety of powers, with *more* effort and more significance of pretension. Mr. Southey, in the *Imaginary Conversation*, goes on to lay before the Professor 'an unpublished and incomplete poem' of the same author, the *Laodamia*, and recites it, but only *in imagination*; after which some ingenious verbal criticisms are made on one or two particular passages. This poem has since been published; and we have no hesitation in saying, that it is a poem the greater part of which might be read aloud in Elysium, and that the spirits of departed heroes and sages might gather round and listen to it! It is sweet and solemn; and, though there is some poorness in the diction, and some indistinctness in the images, it breathes of purity and tenderness, in very genuine and lofty measures. We have great pleasure in saying this—but we must be permitted to add, that we are firmly persuaded Mr. Wordsworth would never have written this classical and manly composition, but for those remarks on his former style, for which we have the misfortune to fall under the lash of Mr. Landor's pen.

The *Ninth Conversation* ('*Marchese Pallavicini and Walter Landor*') contains *scandal* against the English Government—*Conversation X.* ('*General Kleber and some French Officers*') *scandal* against the French

—*Conversation XI.* ('*Buonaparte and the President of the Senate*') *scandal* against good taste and common decency. Let Mr. Landor cancel it—let his publishers strike their asterisks through it. It is short, and not sweet. These fabulous stories about the expedition into Egypt, these low-minded and scurrilous aspersions on Buonaparte, which the Tories palmed upon the credulity of their gulls, the Jacobin poets, have been long discarded by the inventors, and linger only in the pages, rankle only in the hearts of their converts. We would recommend to Mr. Landor, before he writes on this subject again, to read over the allegory of his friend Spenser, describing *Occasion* and *Furor*, and not to be refreshing his groundless and mischievous resentments every moment with a 'Cymocles, oh! I burn!' It is by no means a sufficient reason to believe a thing that it provokes our anger, or excites our disgust; nor is it wise or decorous to bay the moon, and then quarrel with the echo of our own voice. Mr. Landor keeps up a clamour raised by the worst men to answer the worst purposes, only to persuade himself, if possible, that he has not been its dupe. This is the worst of our author's style—it continually explodes and *detonates*—one cannot read him in security, for fear of springing a mine, if any of his prejudices are touched, or passions roused. He is made of combustible materials—sits hatching treason, like the Guy Faux of letters, and is equally ready to blow up a Legitimate Despot, or pounce upon an usurper! Let us turn to Humphrey Hardcastle and Bishop Burnet,—in which the garrulous, credulous, acute, vulgar, and yet graphic style of the latter, is very pleasingly caricatured.

'*Hardcastle.* The pleasure I have taken in the narration of your Lordship is for the greater part independent of what concerns my family. I never knew that my uncle was a poet, and could hardly have imagined that he approached near enough to Mr. Cowley for jealousy or competition.

'*Bishop Burnet.* Indeed, they who discoursed on such matters were of the same opinion, excepting some few, who see nothing before them, and every thing behind. These declared that Hum would overtop Abraham, if he could only drink rather less, think rather more, and feel rather rightlier; that he had great spunk and spirit, and that not a fan was left on a lap when any one sang his airs. Poets, like ministers of state, have their parties; and it is difficult to get at truth upon questions not capable of demonstration, nor founded on matter of fact. To take any trouble about them, is an unwise thing: it is like mounting a wall covered with broken glass: you cut your fingers before you reach the top, and you only discover at last that it is within a span or two of equal height on both

sides. Who would have imagined that the youth who was carried to his long home the other day, I mean my Lord Rochester's reputed child, Mr. George Nelly, was for several seasons a great poet? Yet I remember the time when he was so famous an one that he ran after Mr. Milton up Snow Hill, as the old gentleman was leaning on his daughter's arm, from the Poultry, and treading down the heel of his shoe, called him a rogue and a liar, while another poet sprang out from a grocer's shop, clapping his hands, and crying, "*Bravely done! by Belzebub! the young cock spurs the blind buzzard gallantly.*" On some neighbour representing to Mr. George the respectable character of Mr. Milton, and the probability that at some future time he might be considered as among our geniuses, and such as would reflect a certain portion of credit on his ward, and asking him withal why he appeared to him a rogue and a liar, he replied, "I have proofs known to few: I possess a sort of drama by him, entitled Comus, which was composed for the entertainment of Lord Pembroke, who held an appointment under the King; and this very John has since changed sides, and written in defence of the Commonwealth." —Mr. George began with satirizing his father's friends, and confounding the better part of them with all the hirelings and nuisances of the age, with all the scavengers of lust and all the linkboys of literature; with Newgate solicitors, the patrons of adulterers and forgers, who, in the long vocation, turn a penny by puffing a ballad, and are promised a shilling in silver, for their own benefit, on crying down a religious tract. He soon became reconciled to the latter, and they raised him upon their shoulders above the heads of the wittiest and the wisest. This served a whole winter. Afterwards, whenever he wrote a bad poem, he supported his sinking fame by some signal act of profligacy—an elegy by a seduction, an heroic by an adultery, a tragedy by a divorce. On the remark of a learned man, that irregularity is no indication of genius, he began to lose ground rapidly, when on a sudden he cried out at the Haymarket, *There is no God*! It was then surmised more generally and more gravely that there was something in him, and he stood upon his legs almost to the last. *Say what you will*, once whispered a friend of mine, *there are things in him strong as poison, and original as sin.* Doubts, however, were entertained by some, on more mature reflection, whether he earned all his reputation by that witticism: for soon afterwards he declared at the cockpit, that he had purchased a large assortment of cutlasses and pistols, and that, as he was practising the use of them from morning to night, it would be imprudent in persons who were without them either to laugh or boggle at the Dutch vocabulary with which he had enriched our language. . . .

Having had some concern in bringing his reputed father to a sense of penitence for his offences, I waited on the youth likewise in a former illness, not without hope of leading him ultimately to a better way of thinking. I had hesitated too long: I found him far advanced in his convalescence. My arguments are not worth repeating. He replied thus: "I change my mistresses as Tom Southern his shirt, from economy. I cannot afford to keep few: and I am determined not to be forgotten till I am vastly richer. But I assure you, Dr. Burnet, for your comfort, that if you imagine I am led astray by lasciviousness, as you call it, and lust, you are quite as much mistaken as if you called a book of arithmetic a bawdy book. I calculate on every kiss I give, modest or immodest, on lip or paper. I ask myself one question only—what will it bring me?" On my marvelling, and raising up my hands, "You churchmen," he added, with a laugh, "are too hot in all your quarters for the calm and steddy contemplation of this high mystery." He spake thus loosely, Mr. Hardcastle, and I confess, I was disconcerted and took my leave of him. If I gave him any offence at all, it could only be when he said, "*I should be sorry to die before I have written my life*," and I replied, "*Rather say before you have mended it.*"—"But, doctor," continued he, "the work I propose may bring me a hundred pounds;" whereunto I rejoined, "that which I, young gentleman, suggest in preference will be worth much more to you." At last he is removed from among the living: let us hope the best: to wit, that the mercies which have begun with man's forgetfulness will be crowned with God's forgiveness.' I. 164.

In the *Conversation between Peter Leopold and the President du Paty*, there is a good deal of curious local information and sensible remark; but there is too constant a balance kept up between the arguments in favour of reform, and the difficulties attending it. Our author is one of those *cats-cradle* reasoners who never see a decided advantage in any thing but indecision, one of those adepts in political Platonics, who are always in love with the theory of what is right, till it comes to be put in practice. On the subject of this dialogue, we have but one remark to repeat, which is, that in such matters to be *nominally* humane is to be *practically* so—that where there is a disposition in governments to lessen the sum of human misery, there is the power,—and that the spirit of humanity is the great thing wanting to society!

We own we like Mr. Landor best when he introduces the great men of antiquity upon the carpet. He seems then to throw aside his narrow and captious prejudices, expands his view with the distance of the objects he contemplates, and infuses a strength, a

severity, a fervour and sweetness into his style, not unworthy of the admirable models whom he would be supposed to imitate. Such in great part is the tone of the observations that pass between Demosthenes and Eubulides.

'*Eubulides*. In your language, O Demosthenes! there is a resemblance to the Ilissus, whose waters, as you must have observed, are in most seasons pure and limpid and equable in their course, yet abounding in depths, of which when we discern the bottom, we wonder that we discern it so clearly: the same river at every storm swells into a torrent, without ford or boundary, and is the stronger and the more impetuous from resistance.

'*Demosthenes*. Language is part of a man's character.

'*Eubulides*. It is often artificial.

'*Demosthenes*. Often both are so. I spoke not of such language as that of Gorgias and Isocrates, and other rhetoricians, but of that which belongs to eloquence, of that which enters the heart, however closed against it, of that which pierces like the sword of Perseus, of that which carries us away upon its point as easily as Medea her children, and holds the world below in the same suspense and terror. —I had to form a manner, with great models on one side of me and Nature on the other. Had I imitated Plato (the writer then most admired) I must have fallen short of his amplitude and dignity; and his sentences are seldom such as could be admitted into a popular harangue. Xenophon is elegant, but unimpassioned, and not entirely free, I think, from affectation. Herodotus is the most faultless, and perhaps the most excellent of all. What simplicity! what sweetness! what harmony! not to mention his sagacity of inquiry and his accuracy of description: he could not, however, form an orator for the times in which we live. Aristoteles and Thucydides were before me: I trembled lest they should lead me where I might raise a recollection of Pericles, whose plainness and conciseness and gravity they have imitated, not always with success. Laying down these qualities as the foundation, I have ventured on more solemnity, more passion: I have also been studious to bring the powers of *action* into play, that great instrument in exciting the affections, which Pericles disdained. He and Jupiter could strike my head with their thunderbolts and stand serene and motionless: I could not.' 1. 233.

The Dialogue in the second volume between Pericles and Sophocles breathes the spirit of patriotism and of antiquity, perhaps in a still higher strain, with a bastard allusion, we suspect, to recent politics. The Conversations between Aristotle and Callisthenes, and between Lord Chatham and Lord Chesterfield, (also in the

second volume), contain an admirable estimate, equally sound and acute, of the characters of Aristotle and Plato. Our critic appears to have studied and to have understood these authors well. In our opinion, he rates Cicero too high; we do not mean as to style or oratory, but as a thinker. In this respect, there is little memorable, or new, or profound, in him; and 'he was at best' (as it has been said) 'but an elegant reporter of the Greek philosophy.' Neither can we agree that his historian, Middleton, is so entirely free from affectation as our author supposes. It is Lord Chatham who is made to pronounce the panegyric upon Locke, as 'the most elegant of English prose writers,' which, if our author were not a deliberate paradox-monger, might seem an uncivil irony. His eulogist does not mend the matter much by his definition of elegance, which one would think intended as a test of Lord Chesterfield's politeness. He makes it to consist in a mean between too much prolixity and too much conciseness. Now, (supposing this to be intended seriously) Mr. Locke was certainly one of the most circuitous and diffuse of all writers. This distinguished person neither excelled in the graces of style, according to our author's singular assertion, nor was he (according to the common opinion) the founder of the modern system of metaphysical philosophy. The credit of having laid the basis of this system, and of having completed the great outline of the plan, is beyond all question due to the philosopher of Malmesbury. Mr. Locke's real *forte* was great practical good sense, a determination to look at every question, free from prejudice and according to the evidence suggested to him, and a patient and persevering *doggedness* of understanding in contending with difficulties, and finding out and weighing arguments of opposite tendency. The most valuable parts of his celebrated Essay are those which relate not to the *nature* but to the *conduct* of the understanding; and on that subject, he often proves himself a most sage and judicious adviser. Mr. Locke's Treatise on Education (with all its defects, and an occasional appearance of pedantry), laid the foundation of the modern improvements in that important branch of study; and his book upon Government (written in defence of the Revolution of 1688) remained unimpeached up to the period of the battle of Waterloo. The author of the *Essay on Human Understanding* undoubtedly ranks as the third name in English philosophy, after Newton and Bacon; yet perhaps others, as Hobbes, Berkeley, Butler, Hume, Hartley, and, even in our own times, Horne Tooke, have shown a firmer grasp of mind, as well as greater originality and subtlety of invention, in the same field of inquiry. This opinion may, however, be thought by some petulant and daring, not to say

profane; and we may be accused, in forming or delivering it, of having encroached unawares on the exercise of Mr. Landor's exclusive right of private judgment and free inquiry.

The controversy between the Abbé Delille and our author in person, of which Boileau is the leading subject, is an amusing specimen of verbal criticism. All that it proves however is, that this kind of criticism proves nothing but the acuteness of the writer, and also that those poets who pique themselves on being most exempt from it are the most liable to it. Pope is an example among ourselves. Those who are in the habit of attending to the smallest things, do not see the farthest before them; and, in polishing and correcting one line, they overlook or fall into some fresh mistake in another. The altering and retouching, after a lapse of time, or during the probation of Horace's 'nine years,' is sure to lead to inconsistency and partial oversights. Mr. Landor, in some instances, we imagine, confounds humour with blunders. Thus the truism in the line—

'Que, si sous Adam même, *et loin avant Noë*,'

we should consider as a mere piece of *naïveté*, in the manner of La Fontaine. We will give up, however, without scruple, Boileau's mock-heroics, as we would some English ones of later date. But his satire and his sense we cannot relinquish all at once, though he was a Frenchman, and, what is still worse, a Frenchman of the age of Louis XIV.! It is hard that a people who arrogate all perfections to themselves should possess none; nor can we think that so vast and magnificent a reputation as their literature has acquired, could be raised, as Mr. L. would persuade us, without either art or genius? The Dialogue between Kosciusko and Poniatowski (a subject capable of better things) is remarkable for nothing but a mawkish philanthropy, and a problematical defence of General Pichegru for betraying the Republic and leaguing with the Bourbons. We have nothing to say to this; but, as our author has dedicated one of these volumes to General Mina, will he forgive our recommending him to write a third, in order to inscribe it to Balasteros?

When our literary dramatist attempts common or vulgar humour, he fails totally, as in the *slang* Conversation entitled *Cavaliere Punto Michino, and Mr. Denis Eusebius Talcranagh*. The interview between David Hume and John Home is another failure, at least in so far as relates to character. The author represents the latter as a quiet contented parish minister,—the fact being, that soon after the publication of his play, he abandoned the clerical profession, and went about a fine gentleman, with a blue coat and a pigtail. Horne

Tooke's collision with Dr. Johnson produces only some meagre etymologies and orthographical pedantry, and a tolerably just and highly pointed character of Junius; that between Washington and Franklin only a dull recipe for curing the disorders of Ireland. Prince Maurocordoto and General Colocotroni defend the Greeks, in the Twelfth Conversation of the second volume, on very new and learned principles; but as we have no skill in wood craft, nor in flat-bottomed boats, we pass it over. The last Conversation (supposed to take place between Marcus Tullius Cicero, and his brother Quintus, on the night before his death) is full of an eloquent and philosophic melancholy, which makes it on the whole our favourite :—that between Lopez Banos and Romero Alpuente, we dare be sworn, is the author's; at least it had need, it will be *caviare to the multitude. Par example.*

'*Banos.* At length, Alpuente, the saints of the Holy Alliance have declared war against us.

'*Alpuente.* I have not heard it until now.

'*Banos.* They have directed a memorial to the king of France, inviting him to take such measures as his Majesty, in his wisdom, shall deem convenient, in order to avert the calamities of war, and the dangers of discord, from his frontier.

'*Alpuente.* God forbid that so great a king should fall upon us! O Lord, save us from our enemy, who would eat us up quick, so despitefully and hungrily is he set against us.

'*Banos.* Read the manifesto . . . why do you laugh? Is not this a declaration of hostilities?

'*Alpuente.* To Spaniards, yes. I laughed at the folly and impudence of men, who, for the present of a tobacco-box with a fool's head upon it, string together these old peeled pearls of diplomatic eloquence, and foist them upon the world as arguments and truths. Do kings imagine that they can as easily deceive as they can enslave? and that the mind is as much under their snaffle, as the body is under their axe and halter? Show me one of them, Lopez, who has not violated some promise, who has not usurped some territory, who has not oppressed and subjugated some neighbour; then I will believe him, then I will obey him, then I will acknowledge that those literary heralds who trumpet forth his praises with the newspaper in their hands, are creditable and upright and uncorrupted. The courage of Spain delivered these wretches from the cane and drumhead of a Corsican. Which of them did not crouch before him? which did not flatter him? which did not execute his orders? which did not court his protection? which did not solicit his favour? which did not entreat his forbearance? which did not implore his pardon? which did not abandon and betray him?'

'*Tis a pretty picture;* and did the author suppose, in his blindness to the past and to the future, that the august personages of whom he speaks, after escaping from this state of abject degradation and subjection to that iron scourge, would voluntarily submit to be at the beck and nod of every puny pretender who sets up an authority over them, and undertakes to tutor and *cashier* kings at his discretion? But not to interrupt the dialogue, which thus continues:—

'No ties either of blood or of religion, led or restrained these neophytes in holiness. And now, forsooth, the calamities of war, and the dangers of discord are to be averted, by arming one part of our countrymen against the other, by stationing a military force on our frontier, for the reception of murderers and traitors and incendiaries, and by pointing the bayonet and cannon in our faces. When we smiled at the insults of a beaten enemy, they dictated terms and conditions. At last, his *most Christian Majesty* tells his army, that the nephew of Henry the fourth shall march against us . . . with his feather!

'*Banos.* Ah! that weighs more. The French army will march over fields which cover French armies, and over which the oldest and bravest part of it fled in ignominy and dismay, before our shepherd boys and hunters. What the veterans of Napoleon failed to execute, the household of Louis will accomplish. Parisians! let your comic opera-house lie among its ruins; it cannot be wanted this season.

'*Alpuente.* Shall these battalions which fought so many years for freedom, so many for glory, be supplementary bands to barbarians from Caucasus and Imaus? Shall they shed the remainder of their blood to destroy a cause, for the maintenance of which they offered up its first libation? Time will solve this problem, the most momentous in its solution that ever lay before man. If we are conquered, of which at present I have no apprehension, Europe must become the theatre of new wars, and be divided into three parts, afterwards into two, and the next generation will see all her states and provinces the property of one autocrat, and governed by the most ignorant and lawless of her nations.[1]

'*Banos.* Never was there a revolution, or material change in government, effected with so little bloodshed, so little opposition, so little sorrow or disquietude, as ours. Months had passed away,

[1] We do not see this question in the same point of view as our author. By his leave (as a mere general and speculative question), the conquerors become amalgamated with the conquered: barbarism becomes civilized. The claim of tyrants to rule over slaves is the only principle that is eternal. These are the only two races, whose interests are never reconciled.

years were rolling over us, institutions were consolidating, superstition was relaxing, ingratitude and perfidy were as much forgotten by us, as our services and sufferings were forgotten by Ferdinand, when emissaries, and gold and arms, and FAITH, inciting to discord and rebellion, crossed our frontier . . . and our fortresses were garnished with the bayonets of France, and echoed with the watchwords of the Vatican. If Ferdinand had regarded his oath, and had acceded, in *our* sense of the word *faith*, to the constitution of his country, from which there was hardly a dissentient voice among the industrious and the unambitious, among the peaceable and the wise, would he have eaten one dinner with less appetite, or have embroidered one petticoat with less taste? Would the saints along his chapel-walls have smiled upon him less graciously, or would thy tooth, holy Dominic, have left a less pleasurable impression on his lips? His most Christian Majesty demands *that Ferdinand the seventh may give his people those institutions which they can have from him only!* Yes, these are his expressions, Alpuente; these the doctrines, for the propagation of which our country is to be invaded with fire and sword; this is government, this is order, this is faith! Ferdinand *was* at liberty to give us his institutions: he gave them: what were they? The inquisition in all its terrors, absolute and arbitrary sway, scourges and processions, monks and missionaries, and a tooth of St. Dominic to crown them all. . . . To support the throne that crushes us, and the altar that choaks us, march forward the warlike Louis and the *preux* Chateaubriant, known among his friends to be as firm in belief as Hobbes, Talleyrand, or Spinoza; and behold them advancing, side by side, against the calm opponents of Roman bulls and French charts. Although his Majesty be brave as Maximin at a breakfast, he will find it easier to eat his sixty-four cutlets than to conquer Spain. I doubt whether the same historian shall have to commemorate both exploits.

'*Alpuente.* In wars the least guilty are the sufferers. In these, as in everything, we should contract as much as possible the circle of human misery. The deluded and enslaved should be so far spared as is consistent with security: the most atrocious of murderers and incendiaries, the purveyors and hirers of them, should be removed at any expense or hazard. If we show little mercy to the robber who enters a house by force, and if less ought to be shown to him who should enter it in the season of distress and desolation, what portion of it ought to be extended towards those who assail every house in our country? How much of crime and wretchedness may often be averted, how many years of tranquillity may sometimes be ensured to the world *by one well-chosen example!* Is it not better than to witness

the grief of the virtuous for the virtuous, and the extinction of those bright and lofty hopes, for which the best and wisest of every age contended? Where is the man, worthy of the name, who would be less affected at the lamentation of one mother for her son, slain in defending his country, than at *the extermination of some six or seven usurpers*, commanding or attempting its invasion? National safety legitimates every mean employed upon it. Criminals have been punished differently in different countries: but all enlightened, all honest, all civilised men, must agree *who* are criminals. The Athenians were perhaps as well-informed and intelligent as the people on lake Ladoga: they knew nothing of the *knout*, I confess; and no family amongst them boasted a succession of *assassins*, in wives, sons, fathers, and husbands: but he who endangered or injured his country was condemned to the draught of hemlock! They could punish the offence in another manner: if any nation cannot, shall that nation therefore leave it unpunished? And shall the guiltiest of men enjoy impunity, from a consideration of modes and means? Justice is not to be neglected, because what is preferable is unattainable. A house-breaker is condemned to die, a city-breaker is celebrated by an inscription over the gate. The murder of thousands, soon perpetrated and past, is not the greatest mischief he does: it is followed by the baseness of millions, deepening for ages. Every virtuous man in the universe is a member of that grand Amphictyonic council, which should pass sentence on the too powerful, and provide that it be duly executed. It is just, and it is necessary, that those who pertinaciously insist on so unnatural a state of society, should suffer by the shock things make in recovering their equipoise.' II. 269.

We have given this *tirade*, not with any view to comment on the sentiments it conveys, but to justify what we have said of the outrageous spirit that so frequently breaks out in the present work, and that might reasonably 'condemn the author to the draught of hellebore.' We believe the attempt to revive the exploded doctrine of tyrannicide is peculiar to the reformed Jacobins. We remember a long and well-timed article in the FRIEND, some years ago, on this subject; nor do the strong allusions to the same remedy, in a celebrated journal, form an exception to this remark, at a time when a renegado from the same school directed its attacks upon the Corsican hero. These modern monks and literary jesuits, who would fain set up their own fanatic notions against law and reason, and dictate equally to legitimate kings and revolutionary usurpers, find fault with Napoleon for having thrown his sword into the scale of opinion; and now, finding the want of it, sooner than be baulked of their fancy, would (as far as

we can understand their meaning) substitute the dagger. We cannot applaud their expedients; nor sympathize with that 'final hope' which seems 'flat despair.' If these pragmatical persons could have every thing their own way—if they could confer power and take away the abuse of it—if they could put down tyrants with the sword, and give the law to conquerors with the pen—we should not despair of seeing some good result from this new theocracy. The worst we could fear would be from their fickleness, rashness, and inconsiderate thirst for novelty; but they would not, by their ill-timed servility and gratuitous phrensy, help to bring down the iron hand of power upon us, or enclose us in the dungeons of prejudice and superstition! As it is, they have contrived to throw open the flood-gates of despotism—'to shut exceeds their power:' they have got rid of one tyrant, to establish the principle in perpetuity, and to root out the very name of Freedom. Those of them who are sincere, who are not bribed to silence by places and pensions obtained by their momentary complaisance and seeming inconsistency, speak out, and are sorry for the part they have taken, now that it is too late. They strike 'the marble table with their palm'—they call their country recreant and base—they invoke the shade of Leonidas they apostrophize the spirit of Bolivar—they polish their style like a steel breastplate—they point their sentences like daggers against the bloated apathy of legitimacy—they publish satires on the constitution, and print libels on departed ministers in asterisks—they invent new modes of warfare, and recommend new modes of extermination against despots;—and, in return for all this, the Holy Allies laugh at them, their credulity, their rage, their helplessness, and disappointment. There was one man whom they did not laugh at, but whom they feared and hated; and they persuaded Mr. Landor and others that what they feared and hated above all other things, was out of love to Liberty and Humanity!

Mr. Landor has interspersed some pieces of poetry through these volumes. His muse still retains her *implicit* and inextricable style. The author, some five-and-twenty years ago, published a poem under the title of Gebir, in Latin and English, and equally unintelligible in both, but of which we have heard two lines quoted by his admirers.

> 'Pleas'd they remember their august abodes,
> And murmur as the ocean murmurs there.'

This relates to the sound which sea-shells make if placed close to the ear, and is beautiful and mystic, like something composed in a dream. His tragedy of Count Julian we have not seen.

SHELLEY'S POSTHUMOUS POEMS

Vol. xl.] [*July* 1824.

Mr. Shelley's style is to poetry what astrology is to natural science —a passionate dream, a straining after impossibilites, a record of fond conjectures, a confused embodying of vague abstractions,—a fever of the soul, thirsting and craving after what it cannot have, indulging its love of power and novelty at the expense of truth and nature, associating ideas by contraries, and wasting great powers by their application to unattainable objects.

Poetry, we grant, creates a world of its own; but it creates it out of existing materials. Mr. Shelley is the maker of his own poetry—out of nothing. Not that he is deficient in the true sources of strength and beauty, if he had given himself fair play (the volume before us, as well as his other productions, contains many proofs to the contrary): But, in him, fancy, will, caprice, predominated over and absorbed the natural influences of things; and he had no respect for any poetry that did not strain the intellect as well as fire the imagination—and was not sublimed into a high spirit of metaphysical philosophy. Instead of giving a language to thought, or lending the heart a tongue, he utters dark sayings, and deals in allegories and riddles. His Muse offers her services to clothe shadowy doubts and inscrutable difficulties in a robe of glittering words, and to turn nature into a brilliant paradox. We thank him—but we must be excused. Where we see the dazzling beacon-lights streaming over the darkness of the abyss, we dread the quicksands and the rocks below. Mr. Shelley's mind was of 'too fiery a quality' to repose (for any continuance) on the probable or the true—it soared 'beyond the visible diurnal sphere,' to the strange, the improbable, and the impossible. He mistook the nature of the poet's calling, which should be guided by involuntary, not by voluntary impulses. He shook off, as an heroic and praiseworthy act, the trammels of sense, custom, and sympathy, and became the creature of his own will. He was 'all air,' disdaining the bars and ties of mortal mould. He ransacked his brain for incongruities, and believed in whatever was incredible. Almost all is effort, almost all is extravagant, almost all is quaint, incomprehensible, and abortive, from aiming to be more than it is. Epithets are applied, because they do not fit: subjects are chosen, because they are repulsive: the colours of his style, for their gaudy, changeful, startling effect, resemble the display of fireworks in the dark, and, like them, have neither durability, nor keeping, nor discriminate form. Yet Mr. Shelley, with all his faults,

was a man of genius; and we lament that uncontrollable violence of temperament which gave it a forced and false direction. He has single thoughts of great depth and force, single images of rare beauty, detached passages of extreme tenderness; and, in his smaller pieces, where he has attempted little, he has done most. If some casual and interesting idea touched his feelings or struck his fancy, he expressed it in pleasing and unaffected verse: but give him a larger subject, and time to reflect, and he was sure to get entangled in a system. The fumes of vanity rolled volumes of smoke, mixed with sparkles of fire, from the cloudy tabernacle of his thought. The success of his writings is therefore in general in the inverse ratio of the extent of his undertakings; inasmuch as his desire to teach, his ambition to excel, as soon as it was brought into play, encroached upon, and outstripped his powers of execution.

Mr. Shelley was a remarkable man. His person was a type and shadow of his genius. His complexion, fair, golden, freckled, seemed transparent with an inward light, and his spirit within him

> ——'so divinely wrought,
> That you might almost say his body thought.'

He reminded those who saw him of some of Ovid's fables. His form, graceful and slender, drooped like a flower in the breeze. But he was crushed beneath the weight of thought which he aspired to bear, and was withered in the lightning-glare of a ruthless philosophy! He mistook the nature of his own faculties and feelings—the lowly children of the valley, by which the skylark makes its bed, and the bee murmurs, for the proud cedar or the mountain-pine, in which the eagle builts its eyry, 'and dallies with the wind, and scorns the sun.' —He wished to make of idle verse and idler prose the frame-work of the universe, and to bind all possible existence in the visionary chain of intellectual beauty—

> 'More subtle web Arachne cannot spin,
> Nor the fine nets, which oft we woven see
> Of scorched dew, do not in th' air more lightly flee.'

Perhaps some lurking sense of his own deficiencies in the lofty walk which he attempted, irritated his impatience and his desires; and urged him on, with winged hopes, to atone for past failures by more arduous efforts, and more unavailing struggles.

With all his faults, Mr. Shelley was an honest man. His unbelief and his presumption were parts of a disease, which was not combined in him either with indifference to human happiness, or contempt for human infirmities. There was neither selfishness nor malice at the

bottom of his illusions. He was sincere in all his professions; and he practised what he preached—to his own sufficient cost. He followed up the letter and the spirit of his theoretical principles in his own person, and was ready to share both the benefit and the penalty with others. He thought and acted logically, and was what he professed to be, a sincere lover of truth, of nature, and of human kind. To all the rage of paradox, he united an unaccountable candour and severity of reasoning: in spite of an aristocratic education, he retained in his manners the simplicity of a primitive apostle. An Epicurean in his sentiments, he lived with the frugality and abstemiousness of an ascetick. His fault was, that he had no deference for the opinions of others, too little sympathy with their feelings (which he thought he had a right to sacrifice, as well as his own, to a grand ethical experiment)—and trusted too implicitly to the light of his own mind, and to the warmth of his own impulses. He was indeed the most striking example we remember of the two extremes described by Lord Bacon as the great impediments to human improvement, the love of Novelty, and the love of Antiquity. 'The first of these (impediments) is an extreme affection of two extremities, the one Antiquity, the other Novelty; wherein it seemeth the children of time do take after the nature and malice of the father. For as he devoureth his children, so one of them seeketh to devour and suppress the other; while Antiquity envieth there should be new additions, and Novelty cannot be content to add, but it must deface. Surely the advice of the Prophet is the true direction in this matter: *Stand upon the old ways, and see which is the right and good way, and walk therein.* Antiquity deserveth that reverence, that men should make a stand thereupon, and discover what is the best way; but when the discovery is well taken, then to take progression. And to speak truly, *Antiquitas seculi Juventus mundi.* These times are the ancient times, when the world is ancient, and not those which we count ancient, *ordine retrogrado*, by a computation backwards from ourselves.' (Advancement of Learning, Book I. p. 46.)—Such is the text: and Mr. Shelley's writings are a splendid commentary on one half of it. Considered in this point of view, his career may not be uninstructive even to those whom it most offended; and might be held up as a beacon and warning no less to the bigot than the sciolist. We wish to speak of the errors of a man of genius with tenderness. His nature was kind, and his sentiments noble; but in him the rage of free inquiry and private judgment amounted to a species of madness. Whatever was new, untried, unheard of, unauthorized, exerted a kind of fascination over his mind. The examples of the world, the opinion of others, instead of acting as a check upon him, served but

to impel him forward with double velocity in his wild and hazardous career. Spurning the world of realities, he rushed into the world of nonentities and contingencies, like air into a *vacuum*. If a thing was old and established, this was with him a certain proof of its having no solid foundation to rest upon: if it was new, it was good and right. Every paradox was to him a self-evident truth; every prejudice an undoubted absurdity. The weight of authority, the sanction of ages, the common consent of mankind, were vouchers only for ignorance, error, and imposture. Whatever shocked the feelings of others, conciliated his regard; whatever was light, extravagant, and vain, was to him a proportionable relief from the dulness and stupidity of established opinions. The worst of it however was, that he thus gave great encouragement to those who believe in all received absurdities, and are wedded to all existing abuses: his extravagance seeming to sanction their grossness and selfishness, as theirs were a full justification of his folly and eccentricity. The two extremes in this way often meet, jostle,—and confirm one another. The infirmities of age are a foil to the presumption of youth; and 'there the antics sit,' mocking one another—the ape Sophistry pointing with reckless scorn at 'palsied eld,' and the bed-rid hag, Legitimacy, rattling her chains, counting her beads, dipping her hands in blood, and blessing herself from all change and from every appeal to common sense and reason! Opinion thus alternates in a round of contradictions: the impatience or obstinacy of the human mind takes part with, and flies off to one or other of the two extremes 'of affection' and leaves a horrid gap, a blank sense and feeling in the middle, which seems never likely to be filled up, without a total change in our mode of proceeding. The martello-towers with which we are to repress, if we cannot destroy, the systems of fraud and oppression should not be castles in the air, or clouds in the verge of the horizon, but the enormous and accumulated pile of abuses which have arisen out of their continuance. The principles of sound morality, liberty and humanity, are not to be found only in a few recent writers, who have discovered the secret of the greatest happiness to the greatest numbers, but are truths as old as the creation. To be convinced of the existence of wrong, we should read history rather than poetry: the levers with which we must work out our regeneration are not the cobwebs of the brain, but the warm, palpitating fibres of the human heart. It is the collision of passions and interests, the petulance of party-spirit, and the perversities of self-will and self-opinion that have been the great obstacles to social improvement—not stupidity or ignorance; and the caricaturing one side of the question and shocking the most pardonable prejudices on the other,

is not the way to allay heats or produce unanimity. By flying to the extremes of scepticism, we make others shrink back, and shut themselves up in the strongholds of bigotry and superstition—by mixing up doubtful or offensive matters with salutary and demonstrable truths, we bring the whole into question, fly-blow the cause, risk the principle, and give a handle and a pretext to the enemy to treat all philosophy and all reform as a compost of crude, chaotic, and monstrous absurdities. We thus arm the virtues as well as the vices of the community against us; we trifle with their understandings, and exasperate their self-love; we give to superstition and injustice all their old security and sanctity, as if they were the only alternatives of impiety and profligacy, and league the natural with the selfish prejudices of mankind in hostile array against us. To this consummation, it must be confessed that too many of Mr. Shelley's productions pointedly tend. He makes no account of the opinions of others, or the consequences of any of his own; but proceeds—tasking his reason to the utmost to account for every thing, and discarding every thing as mystery and error for which he cannot account by an effort of mere intelligence—measuring man, providence, nature, and even his own heart, by the limits of the understanding—now hallowing high mysteries, now desecrating pure sentiments, according as they fall in with or exceeded those limits; and exalting and purifying, with Promethean heat, whatever he does not confound and debase.

Mr. Shelley died, it seems, with a volume of Mr. Keats's poetry grasped with one hand in his bosom! These are two out of four poets, patriots and friends, who have visited Italy within a few years, both of whom have been soon hurried to a more distant shore. Keats died young; and 'yet his infelicity had years too many.' A canker had blighted the tender bloom that o'erspread a face in which youth and genius strove with beauty; the shaft was sped—venal, vulgar, venomous, that drove him from his country, with sickness and penury for companions, and followed him to his grave. And yet there are those who could trample on the faded flower—men to whom breaking hearts are a subject of merriment—who laugh loud over the silent urn of Genius, and play out their game of venality and infamy with the crumbling bones of their victims! To this band of immortals a third has since been added!—a mightier genius, a haughtier spirit, whose stubborn impatience and Achilles-like pride only Death could quell. Greece, Italy, the world, have lost their poet-hero; and his death has spread a wider gloom, and been recorded with a deeper awe, than has waited on the obsequies of any of the many great who have died in our remembrance. Even detraction has been silent at

his tomb; and the more generous of his enemies have fallen into the rank of his mourners. But he set like the sun in his glory; and his orb was greatest and brightest at the last; for his memory is now consecrated no less by freedom than genius. He probably fell a martyr to his zeal against tyrants. He attached himself to the cause of Greece, and dying, clung to it with a convulsive grasp, and has thus gained a niche in her history; for whatever *she* claims as hers is immortal, even in decay, as the marble sculptures on the columns of her fallen temples!

The volume before us is introduced by an imperfect but touching Preface by Mrs. Shelley, and consists almost wholly of original pieces, with the exception of *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*, which was out of print; and the admirable Translation of the *May-day Night*, from Goethe's Faustus.

Julian and Maddalo (the first Poem in the collection) is a Conversation or Tale, full of that thoughtful and romantic humanity, but rendered perplexing and unattractive by that veil of shadowy or of glittering obscurity, which distinguished Mr. Shelley's writings. The depth and tenderness of his feelings seems often to have interfered with the expression of them, as the sight becomes blind with tears. A dull, waterish vapour, clouds the aspect of his philosophical poetry, like that mysterious gloom which he has himself described as hanging over the Medusa's Head of Leonardo da Vinci. The metre of this poem, too, will not be pleasing to every body. It is in the antique taste of the rhyming parts of Beaumont and Fletcher and Ben Jonson —blank verse in its freedom and unbroken flow, falling into rhymes that appear altogether accidental—very colloquial in the diction—and sometimes sufficiently prosaic. But it is easier showing than describing it. We give the introductory passage.

> 'I rode one evening with Count Maddalo
> Upon the bank of land which breaks the flow
> Of Adria towards Venice: a bare strand
> Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,
> Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,
> Such as from earth's embrace the salt ooze breeds,
> Is this: an uninhabited sea-side,
> Which the lone fisher, when his nets are dried,
> Abandons; and no other object breaks
> The waste, but one dwarf tree and some few stakes
> Broken and unrepaired, and the tide makes
> A narrow space of level sand thereon,
> Where 'twas our wont to ride while day went down.
> This ride was my delight. I love all waste
> And solitary places; where we taste

The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
More barren than its billows; and yet more
Than all, with a remember'd friend I love
To ride as then I rode;—for the winds drove
The living spray along the sunny air
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,
Stripped to their depths by the awakening North;
And, from the waves, sound like delight broke forth
Harmonising with solitude, and sent
Into our hearts aerial merriment.
So, as we rode, we talked; and the swift thought,
Winging itself with laughter, lingered not,
But flew from brain to brain,—such glee was ours,
Charged with light memories of remembered hours,
None slow enough for sadness: till we came
Homeward, which always makes the spirit tame.' &c.

'Meanwhile the sun paused ere it should alight
O'er the horizon of the mountains—Oh!
How beautiful is sunset, when the glow
Of heaven descends upon a land like thee,
Thou paradise of exiles, Italy!
Thy mountains, seas, and vineyards, and the towers
Of cities they encircle!—It was ours
To stand on thee, beholding it: and then,
Just where we had dismounted, the Count's men
Were waiting for us with the gondola.
As those who pause on some delightful way,
Tho' bent on pleasant pilgrimage, we stood,
Looking upon the evening and the flood,
Which lay between the city and the shore,
Paved with the image of the sky; the hoar
And aery Alps, towards the North, appeared,
Thro' mist, an heaven-sustaining bulwark, reared
Between the east and west; and half the sky
Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,
Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew
Down the steep west into a wondrous hue
Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent
Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent
Among the many-folded hills—they were
Those famous Euganean hills, which bear,
As seen from Lido thro' the harbour piles,
The likeness of a clump of peaked isles—
And then, as if the earth and sea had been
Dissolv'd into one lake of fire, were seen
Those mountains towering, as from waves of flame,
Around the vaporous sun, from which there came

The inmost purple spirit of light, and made
Their very peaks transparent. "Ere it fade,"
Said my companion, "I will show you soon
A better station." So, o'er the lagune
We glided; and from that funereal bark
I leaned, and saw the city, and could mark
How from their many isles, in evening's gleam,
Its temples and its palaces did seem
Like fabrics of enchantment piled to Heaven.
I was about to speak, when—"We are even
Now at the point I meant"—said Maddalo,
And bade the gondolieri cease to row.
"Look, Julian, on the west, and listen well
If you hear not a deep and heavy bell."
I looked, and saw between us and the sun
A building on an island, such an one
As age to age might add, for uses vile—
A windowless, deformed, and dreary pile;
And on the top an open tower, where hung
A bell, which in the radiance swayed and swung,
We could just hear its hoarse and iron tongue:
The broad sun sank behind it, and it tolled
In strong and black relief. "What you behold
Shall be the madhouse and its belfry tower,"—
Said Maddalo, "and even at this hour,
Those who may cross the water hear that bell,
Which calls the maniacs, each one from his cell,
To vespers," &c.

'The broad star
Of day meanwhile had sunk behind the hill;
And the black bell became invisible;
And the red tower looked grey; and all between,
The churches, ships, and palaces, were seen
Huddled in gloom. Into the purple sea
The orange hues of heaven sunk silently.
We hardly spoke, and soon the gondola
Conveyed me to my lodging by the way.'

The march of these lines is, it must be confessed, slow, solemn, sad: there is a sluggishness of feeling, a dearth of imagery, an unpleasant glare of lurid light. It appears to us, that in some poets, as well as in some painters, the organ of colour (to speak in the language of the adepts) predominates over that of form; and Mr. Shelley is of the number. We have everywhere a profusion of dazzling hues, of glancing splendours, of floating shadows, but the objects on which they fall are bare, indistinct, and wild. There is something in the preceding extract that reminds us of the arid style

and matter of Crabbe's versification, or that apes the labour and throes of parturition of Wordsworth's blank-verse. It is the preface to a story of Love and Madness—of mental anguish and philosophic remedies—not very intelligibly told, and left with most of its mysteries unexplained, in the true spirit of the modern metaphysical style—in which we suspect there is a due mixture of affectation and meagreness of invention.

This poem is, however, in Mr. Shelley's best and *least mannered* manner. If it has less brilliancy, it has less extravagance and confusion. It is in his stanza-poetry, that his Muse chiefly runs riot, and baffles all pursuit of common comprehension or critical acumen. The *Witch of Atlas*, the *Triumph of Life*, and *Marianne's Dream*, are rhapsodies or allegories of this description; full of fancy and of fire, with glowing allusions and wild machinery, but which it is difficult to read through, from the disjointedness of the materials, the incongruous metaphors and violent transitions, and of which, after reading them through, it is impossible, in most instances, to guess the drift or the moral. They abound in horrible imaginings, like records of a ghastly dream;—life, death, genius, beauty, victory, earth, air, ocean, the trophies of the past, the shadows of the world to come, are huddled together in a strange and hurried dance of words, and all that appears clear, is the passion and paroxysm of thought of the poet's spirit. The poem entitled the *Triumph of Life*, is in fact a new and terrific *Dance of Death*; but it is thus Mr. Shelley transposes the appellations of the commonest things, and subsists only in the violence of contrast. How little this poem is deserving of its title, how worthy it is of its author, what an example of the waste of power, and of genius 'made as flax,' and devoured by its own elementary ardours, let the reader judge from the concluding stanzas.

. . . . . 'The grove
Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers,
The earth was grey with phantoms, and the air
Was peopled with dim forms; as when there hovers

A flock of vampire-bats before the glare
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,
Strange night upon some Indian vale;—thus were

Phantoms diffused around; and some did fling
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing

Were lost in the white day; others like elves
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

And others sate chattering shrill like restless apes
On vulgar hands, * * * * *
Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

Of kingly mantles; some across the tire
Of pontiffs rode, like demons; others played
Under the crown which girded with empire

A baby's or an idiot's brow, and made
Their nests in it. The old anatomies
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

Of demon wings, and laughed from their dead eyes
To reassume the delegated power,
Array'd in which those worms did monarchize,

Who make this earth their charnel. Others more
Humble, like falcons, sate upon the fist
Of common men, and round their heads did soar;

Or like small gnats and flies, as thick as mist
On evening marshes, thronged about the brow
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest and theorist;—

And others, like discoloured flakes of snow,
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

Which they extinguished * * * * *

The marble brow of youth was cleft
With care; and in those eyes where once hope shone,
Desire, even like a lioness bereft

Of her last cub, glared ere it died; each one
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

In autumn evening from a poplar tree.
Each like himself, and like each other were
At first; but some, distorted, seemed to be

Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual air;
And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrapt all the busy phantoms that were there,

As the sun shapes the clouds, &c.'

Any thing more filmy, enigmatical, discontinuous, unsubstantial than this, we have not seen; nor yet more full of morbid genius and vivifying soul. We cannot help preferring *The Witch of Atlas* to *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*; for, though the purport of each is equally perplexing and undefined, (both being a sort of mental

voyage through the unexplored regions of space and time), the execution of the one is much less dreary and lamentable than that of the other. In the 'Witch,' he has indulged his fancy more than his melancholy, and wantoned in the felicity of embryo and crude conceits even to excess.

> 'And there lay Visions, swift, and sweet, and quaint,
> Each in its thin sheath like a crysalis;
> Some eager to burst forth, some weak and faint
> With the soft burthen of intensest bliss;
>
> 'And odours in a kind of aviary
> Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,
> Clipt in a floating net, a love-sick Fairy
> Had woven from dew-beams while the moon yet slept;
> As bats at the wired window of a dairy,
> They beat their vans; and each was an adept,
> When loosed and missioned, making wings of winds,
> To stir sweet thoughts or sad in destined minds.' p. 34.

We give the description of the progress of the 'Witch's' boat as a slight specimen of what we have said of Mr. Shelley's involved style and imagery.

> 'And down the streams which clove those mountains vast,
> Around their inland islets, and amid
> The panther-peopled forests, whose shade cast
> Darkness and odours, and a pleasure hid
> In melancholy gloom, the pinnace past:
> By many a star-surrounded pyramid
> Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,
> And caverns yawning round unfathomably.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> 'And down the earth-quaking cataracts which shiver
> Their snow-like waters into golden air,
> Or under chasms unfathomable ever
> Sepulchre them, till in their rage they tear
> A subterranean portal for the river,
> It fled—the circling *sunbows* did upbear
> Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,
> Lighting it far upon its lampless way.'

This we conceive to be the very height of wilful extravagance and mysticism. Indeed it is curious to remark every where the proneness to the marvellous and supernatural, in one who so resolutely set his face against every received mystery, and all traditional faith. Mr. Shelley must have possessed, in spite of all his obnoxious and indis-

creet scepticism, a large share of credulity and wondering curiosity in his composition, which he reserved from common use, and bestowed upon his own inventions and picturesque caricatures. To every other species of imposture or disguise he was inexorable; and indeed it is only his antipathy to established creeds and legitimate crowns that ever tears the veil from his *ideal* idolatries, and renders him clear and explicit. Indignation makes him pointed and intelligible enough, and breathes into his verse a spirit very different from his own boasted spirit of Love.

The *Letter to a Friend in London* shows the author in a pleasing and familiar, but somewhat prosaic light; and his *Prince Athanase, a Fragment*, is, we suspect, intended as a portrait of the writer. It is amiable, thoughtful, and not much over-charged. We had designed to give an extract, but from the apparently personal and doubtful interest attached to it, perhaps it had better be read altogether, or not at all. We rather choose to quote a part of the *Ode to Naples*, during her brief revolution,—in which immediate and strong local feelings have at once raised and pointed Mr. Shelley's style, and made of light-winged "toys of feathered cupid," the flaming ministers of Wrath and Justice.

. . . . . .

'Naples! thou Heart of men which ever pantest
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian City which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea: they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven!
Metropolis of a ruined Paradise
Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!

. . . . . .

'What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
Freedom and thee! thy shield is as a mirror
To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer.
A new Acteon's error
Shall their's have been—devoured by their own hounds!
Be thou like the imperial Basilisk
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
Gaze on oppression, till at that dead risk
Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk,
Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe;
If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,
Thou shalt be great—All hail!

. . . . . .

'Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan
From land to land re-echoed solemnly,
Till silence became music? From the Æean[1]
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy
Starts to hear thine! The Sea
Which paves the desart streets of Venice, laughs
In light and music; widowed Genoa wan
By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,
Murmuring, where is Doria? fair Milan,
Within whose veins long ran
The vipers[2] palsying venom, lifts her heel
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)
Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail!

'Florence! beneath the sun,
Of cities fairest one,
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation;
From eyes of quenchless hope
Rome tears the priestly cope,
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration
An athlete stript to run
From a remoter station
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:—
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail,
So now may Fraud and Wrong!—O hail!

'Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
Arrayed against the everliving Gods?
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
Bursting their inaccessible abodes
Of crags and thunder-clouds?
See ye the banners blazoned to the day,
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?
Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,
The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden, wide
With iron light is dyed!
The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions,
Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;
An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions
And lawless slaveries,—down the aërial regions
Of the white Alps, desolating,
Famished wolves that bide no waiting,
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
Trampling our columned cities into dust,
Their dull and savage lust

[1] 'Ææa, the island of Circe.'
[2] 'The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tryants of Milan.'

On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—
They come! The fields they tread look black and hoary
With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory!

'Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it:
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison
From the Earth's bosom chill;
O bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!
Bid the Earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or with thine harmonising ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from Thee
Would not more swiftly flee
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, O let be
This city of thy worship ever free!'

This Ode for Liberty, though somewhat turbid and overloaded in the diction, we regard as a fair specimen of Mr. Shelley's highest powers—whose eager animation wanted only a greater sternness and solidity to be sublime. The poem is dated *September* 1820. Such were then the author's aspirations. He lived to see the result,—and yet Earth does not roll its billows over the heads of its oppressors! The reader may like to contrast with this the milder strain of the following stanzas, addressed to the same city in a softer and more desponding mood.

'The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent light

Around its unexpanded buds ;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
The City's voice itself is soft, like Solitude's.

'I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple seaweeds strown ;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown :
I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet ! did any heart now share in my emotion.

'Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are ;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

'Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan ;
They might lament—for I am one
Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.'

We pass on to some of Mr. Shelley's smaller pieces and translations, which we think are in general excellent and highly interesting. His *Hymn of Pan* we do not consider equal to Mr. Keats's sounding lines in the Endymion. His *Mont Blanc* is full of beauties and of defects ; but it is akin to its subject, and presents a wild and gloomy desolation. Ginevra, a fragment founded on a story in the first volume of the '*Florentine Observer*,' is like a troublous dream, disjointed, painful, oppressive, or like a leaden cloud, from which the big tears fall, and the spirit of the poet mutters deep-toned thunder. We are too much subject to these voluntary inflictions, these 'moods of mind,' these effusions of 'weakness and melancholy,' in the perusal of modern poetry. It has shuffled off, no doubt, its old pedantry and formality ; but has at the same time lost all shape or purpose, except

that of giving vent to some morbid feeling of the moment. The writer thus discharges a fit of the spleen or a paradox, and expects the world to admire and be satisfied. We are no longer annoyed at seeing the luxuriant growth of nature and fancy clipped into arm-chairs and peacocks' tails; but there is danger of having its stately products choked with unchecked underwood, or weighed down with gloomy nightshade, or eaten up with personality, like ivy clinging round and eating into the sturdy oak! The *Dirge*, at the conclusion of this fragment, is an example of the manner in which this craving after novelty, this desire 'to elevate and surprise,' leads us to 'overstep the modesty of nature,' and the bounds of decorum.

> 'Ere the sun through heaven once more has roll'd
> *The rats in her heart*
> *Will have made their nest,*
> And the worms be alive in her golden hair,
> While the spirit that guides the sun,
> Sits throned in his flaming chair,
> She shall sleep.'

The 'worms' in this stanza are the old and traditional appendages of the grave;—the 'rats' are new and unwelcome intruders; but a modern artist would rather shock, and be disgusting and extravagant, than produce no effect at all, or be charged with a want of genius and originality. In the unfinished scenes of Charles I., (a drama on which Mr. Shelley was employed at his death) the *radical* humour of the author breaks forth, but 'in good set terms' and specious oratory. We regret that his premature fate has intercepted this addition to our historical drama. From the fragments before us, we are not sure that it would be fair to give any specimen.

The Translations from Euripides, Calderon, and Goethe in this Volume, will give great pleasure to the scholar and to the general reader. They are executed with equal fidelity and spirit. If the present publication contained only the two last pieces in it, the *Prologue in Heaven*, and the *May-day Night* of the Faust (the first of which Lord Leveson Gower has omitted, and the last abridged, in his very meritorious translation of that Poem), the intellectual world would receive it with an *All Hail*! We shall enrich our pages with a part of the *May-day Night*, which the Noble Poet has deemed untranslateable.

> '*Chorus of Witches.* The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
> Now to the brocken the witches go;
> The mighty multitude here may be seen
> Gathering, witch and wizard, below.

Sir Urean is sitting aloft in the air;
Hey over stock; and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!
A Voice. Upon a snow-swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo rideth alone.
Chorus. Honour her to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind,
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind.
A Voice. Which way comest thou?
A Voice. Over Ilsenstein;
The owl was awake in the white moonshine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad, bright eye.
Voices. And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,
Since you ride by so fast, on the headlong blast.
A Voice. She dropt poison upon me as I past.
Here are the wounds—
Chorus of Witches. Come away! come along!
The way is wide, the way is long,
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom!
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
And the mother is clapping her hands—
Semi-Chorus of Wizards I. We glide in
Like snails when the women are all away;
And from a house once given over to sin
Woman has a thousand steps to stray.
Semi-Chorus II. A thousand steps must a woman take,
Where a man but a single spring will make.
Voices above. Come with us, come with us, from Felunsee.
Voices below. With what joy would we fly, through the upper sky!
We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we:
But our toil and our pain is forever in vain.
Both Chorusses. The wind is still, the stars are fled,
The melancholy moon is dead;
The magic notes, like spark on spark,
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.
Come away!
Voices below. Stay, oh stay!
Meph. What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling;
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,
As Heaven and Earth were overturning.
There is a true witch-element about us.
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided—

Where are you?
Faust (*from a distance*). Here.
Meph. What!
I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Voland! Pray make way, good people.
Take hold on me, Doctor, and with one step
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones
Wisely attired with greater decency.
Be guided now by me, and you shall buy
A pound of pleasure with a drachm of trouble.
I hear them tune their instruments—one must
Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you
Among them; and what there you do and see
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.
How say you now? This space is wide enough—
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable:
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?
Faust. In introducing us, do you assume
The character of wizzard or of devil?
Meph. In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito: and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home, the cloven foot is honourable.
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something.
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the pimp and you shall be the lover.' p. 409.

The preternatural imagery in all this medley is, we confess, (comparatively speaking) meagre and monotonous; but there is a squalid nudity, and a fiendish irony and scorn thrown over the whole, that is truly edifying. The scene presently after proceeds thus.

'*Meph.* Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?
Faust. A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprung from her mouth!
Meph. That was all right, my friend;
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.
Do not disturb your hour of happiness

With close consideration of such trifles.
Faust. Then saw I—
Meph. What?
Faust. Seest thou not a pale
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet;
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret!
Meph. Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it.—It is an enchanted phantom,
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.
Faust. Oh, too true!
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse
Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!
That is the heart which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!
Meph. It is all magic, poor deluded fool;
She looks to every one like his first love.
Faust. Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!
Meph. Aye, she can carry
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her! These pleasures
End in delusion!'—

The latter part of the foregoing scene is to be found in both translations; but we prefer Mr. Shelley's, if not for its elegance, for its simplicity and force. Lord Leveson Gower has given, at the end of his volume, a translation of Lessing's Faust, as having perhaps furnished the hint for the larger production. There is an old tragedy of our own, founded on the same tradition, by Marlowe, in which the author has treated the subject according to the spirit of poetry, and the learning of his age. He has not evaded the main incidents of the fable (it was not the fashion of the dramatists of his day), nor sunk the chief character in glosses and episodes (however subtle or alluring), but has described Faustus's love of learning, his philosophic dreams and raptures, his religious horrors and melancholy fate, with appropriate gloom or gorgeousness of colouring. The character of the old enthusiastic inquirer after the philosopher's stone, and dealer

with the Devil, is nearly lost sight of in the German play: its bold development forms the chief beauty and strength of the old English one. We shall not, we hope, be accused of wandering too far from the subject, if we conclude with some account of it in the words of a contemporary writer. 'The *Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*, though an imperfect and unequal performance, is Marlowe's greatest work. Faustus himself is a rude sketch, but is a gigantic one. This character may be considered as a personification of the pride of will and eagerness of curiosity, sublimed beyond the reach of fear and remorse. He is hurried away, and, as it were, devoured by a tormenting desire to enlarge his knowledge to the utmost bounds of nature and art, and to extend his power with his knowledge. He would realize all the fictions of a lawless imagination, would solve the most subtle speculations of abstruse reason; and for this purpose, sets at defiance all mortal consequences, and leagues himself with demoniacal power, with "fate and metaphysical aid." The idea of witchcraft and necromancy, once the dread of the vulgar, and the darling of the visionary recluse, seems to have had its origin in the restless tendency of the human mind, to conceive of, and aspire to, more than it can achieve by natural means; and in the obscure apprehension, that the gratification of this extravagant and unauthorized desire can only be attained by the sacrifice of all our ordinary hopes and better prospects, to the infernal agents that lend themselves to its accomplishment. Such is the foundation of the present story. Faustus, in his impatience to fulfil at once, and for a few short years, all the desires and conceptions of his soul, is willing to give in exchange his soul and body to the great enemy of mankind. Whatever he fancies, becomes by this means present to his sense: whatever he commands, is done. He calls back time past, and anticipates the future: the visions of antiquity pass before him, Babylon in all its glory, Paris and Œnone: all the projects of philosophers, or creations of the poet, pay tribute at his feet: all the delights of fortune, of ambition, of pleasure and of learning, are centred in his person; and, from a short-lived dream of supreme felicity and drunken power, he sinks into an abyss of darkness and perdition. This is the alternative to which he submits; the bond which he signs with his blood! As the outline of the character is grand and daring, the execution is abrupt and fearful. The thoughts are vast and irregular, and the style halts and staggers under them.'[1]

[1] Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.

LADY MORGAN'S LIFE OF SALVATOR

Vol. XL.] [*July* 1824.

We are not among the devoted admirers of Lady Morgan. She is a clever and lively writer—but not very judicious, and not very natural. Since she has given up making novels, we do not think she has added much to her reputation—and indeed is rather more liable than before to the charge of tediousness and presumption. There is no want, however, either of amusement or instruction in her late performances —and we have no doubt she would write very agreeably, if she was only a little less ambitious of being always fine and striking. But though we are thus clear-sighted to her defects, we must say, that we have never seen anything more utterly unjust, or more disgusting and disgraceful, than the abuse she has had to encounter from some of our Tory journals—abuse, of which we shall say no more at present, than that it is incomparably less humiliating to the object than to the author.

Common justice seemed to require this observation from us—nor will it appear altogether out of place when we add, that we cannot but suspect that it is to a feeling connected with that subject that we are indebted for the work now before us. Salvator Rosa was, like his fair biographer, in hostility with the High-church and High-monarchy men of his day; and the enemy of the Holy Alliance, in the nineteenth century, must have followed with peculiar interest the fortunes of an artist who was so obnoxious to the suspicions of the Holy Office in the seventeenth.

There are few works more engaging than those which reveal to us the private history of eminent individuals; the lives of painters seem to be even more interesting than those of almost any other class of men; and, among painters, there are few names of greater note, or that have a more powerful attraction, than that of Salvator Rosa. We are not sure, however, that Lady Morgan's work is not, upon the whole, more calculated to dissolve than to rivet the spell which these circumstances might, at first, throw over the reader's mind. The great charm of biography consists in the individuality of the details, the familiar tone of the incidents, the bringing us acquainted with the persons of men whom we have formerly known only by their works or names, the absence of all exaggeration or pretension, and the immediate appeal to facts instead of theories. We are afraid, that, if tried by these rules, Lady Morgan will be found *not* to have written *biography*. A great part of the work is, accordingly, very fabulous and apocryphal. We are supplied with few anecdotes or striking

traits, and have few *data* to go upon, during the early and most anxious period of Salvator's life; but a fine opportunity is in this way afforded to *conjecture* how he did or did not pass his time; in what manner, and at what precise era, his peculiar talents first developed themselves; and how he must have felt in certain situations, supposing him ever to have been placed in them. In one place, for example, she employs several pages in describing Salvator's being taken by his father from his village-home to the College of Somasco, with a detailed account of the garments in which he and his father may be presumed to have been dressed; the adieus of his mother and sisters; the streets, the churches by which they passed; in short, with an admirable panoramic view of the city of Naples and its environs, as it would appear to any modern traveller; and an assurance at the end, that 'Such was the scenery of the Vomiro in the beginning of the seventeenth century; such is it now!' Added to all which, we have, at every turn, pertinent allusions to celebrated persons who visited Rome and Italy in the same century, and perhaps wandered in the same solitudes, or were hid in the recesses of the same ruins; and learned dissertations on the state of the arts, sciences, morals, and politics, from the earliest records up to the present day. On the meagre thread of biography, in short, Lady Morgan has been ambitious to string the flowers of literature and the pearls of philosophy, and to strew over the obscure and half-forgotten origin of poor Salvator the colours of a sanguine enthusiasm and a florid imagination! So fascinated indeed is she with the splendour of her own style, that whenever she has a simple fact or well-authenticated anecdote to relate, she is compelled to apologize for the homeliness of the circumstance, as if the flat realities of her story were unworthy accompaniments to the fine imaginations with which she has laboured to exalt it.

We could have wished, certainly, that she had shown less pretension in this respect. Women write well, only when they write naturally: And therefore we could dispense with their inditing prize-essays or solving *academic questions*;—and should be far better pleased with Lady Morgan if she would condescend to a more ordinary style, and not insist continually on playing the diplomatist in petticoats, and strutting the little Gibbon of her age!

Another circumstance that takes from the interest of the present work is, that the subject of it was both an author and an artist, or, as Lady Morgan somewhat affectedly expresses it, a painter-poet. It is chiefly in the latter part of this compound character, or as a satirist, comic writer and actor, that he comes upon the stage in these volumes; and the enchantment of the scene is hurt by it.

The great secret of our curiosity respecting the lives of painters is, that they seem to be a different race of beings, and to speak a different language from ourselves. We want to see what is the connecting link between pictures and books, and how colours will translate into words. There is something mystical and anomalous to our conceptions in the existence of persons who talk by natural signs, and express their thoughts by pointing to the objects they wish to represent. When they put pen to paper, it is as if a dumb person should stammer out his meaning for the first time, or as if the bark of a tree (repeating the miracle in Virgil) should open its lips and discourse. We have no notion how Titian could be witty, or Raphael learned; and we wait for the solution of the problem, as for the result of some curious experiment in natural history. Titian's acquitting himself of a compliment to Charles V., or Raphael's writing a letter to a friend, describing his idea of the Galatea, excites our wonder, and holds us in a state of breathless suspense, more than the first having painted all the masterpieces of the Escurial, or than the latter's having realized the divine idea in his imagination. Because they have a language which we want, we fancy they must want, or cannot be at home in ours;—we start and blush to find, that, though few are painters, all men are, and naturally must be, orators and poets. We have a stronger desire to see the autographs of artists than of authors or emperors; for we somehow cannot imagine in what manner they would form their tottering letters, or sign their untaught names. We in fact exercise a sort of mental superiority and imaginary patronage over them (delightful in proportion as it is mixed up with a sense of awe and homage in other respects); watch their progress like that of grown children; are charmed with the imperfect glimmerings of wit or sense; and secretly expect to find them,—or express all the impertinence of an affected surprise if we do not—what Claude Lorraine is here represented to have been out of his painting room, little better than natural changelings and drivellers. It pleases us therefore to be told, that Gaspar Poussin, when he was not painting, rode a hunting; that Nicolas was (it is pretended) a miser and a pedant—that Domenichino was retired and modest, and Guido and Annibal Caracci unfortunate! This is as it should be, and flatters our self-love. Their works stand out to ages bold and palpable, and dazzle or inspire by their beauty and their brilliancy;—That is enough—the rest sinks into the ground of obscurity, or is only brought out as something odd and unaccountable by the patient efforts of good-natured curiosity. But all this fine theory and flutter of contradictory expectations is balked and knocked on the head at once, when, instead of a dim and shadowy figure in the background, a mere

name, of which nothing is remembered but its immortal works, a poor creature performing miracles of art, and not knowing how it has performed them, a person steps forward, bold, gay, *gaillard*, with all his faculties about him, master of a number of accomplishments which he is not backward to display, mingling with the throng, looking defiance around, able to answer for himself, acquainted with his own merits, and boasting of them, not merely having the gift of speech, but a celebrated *improvisatore*, musician, comic actor and buffoon, patriot and cynic, reciting and talking equally well, taking up his pen to write satires, and laying it down to paint them. There is a vulgarity in all this practical bustle and restless stage-effect, that takes away from that abstracted and simple idea of art which at once attracts and baffles curiosity, like a distinct element in nature. 'Painting,' said Michael Angelo, is jealous, and requires the whole man to herself.' And there is some thing sacred and privileged in the character of those heirs of fame, and their noiseless reputation, which ought not, we think, to be gossipped to the air, babbled to the echo, or proclaimed by beat of drum at the corners of streets, like a procession or a puppet-show. We may peep and pry into the ordinary life of painters, but it will not do to strip them stark-naked. A speaking portrait of them—an anecdote or two—an expressive saying dropped by chance—an incident marking the bent of their genius, or its fate, are delicious; but here we should draw the curtain, or we shall profane this sort of image-worship. Least of all do we wish to be entertained with private brawls, or professional squabbles, or multifarious pretensions. 'The essence of genius,' as Lady Morgan observes, 'is concentration.' So is that of enthusiasm. We lay down the 'Life and Times of Salvator Rosa,' therefore, with less interest in the subject than when we took it up. We had rather not read it. Instead of the old and floating traditions on the subject,—instead of the romantic name and romantic pursuits of the daring copyist of Nature, conversing with her rudest forms, or lost in lonely musing,—eyeing the clouds that roll over his head, or listening to the waterfal, or seeing the fresh breeze waving the mountain-pines, or leaning against the side of an impending rock, or marking the bandit that issues from its clefts, 'housing with wild men, with wild usages,' himself unharmed and free,—and bequeathing the fruit of his uninterrupted retirement and out-of-doors studies as the best legacy to posterity,—we have the Coviello of the Carnival, the *causeur* of the saloons, the political malecontent, the satirist, sophist, caricaturist, the trafficker with Jews, the wrangler with courts and academies, and, last of all, the painter of history, despising his own best works, and angry with all who admired or purchased them.

The worst fault that Lady Morgan has committed is in siding

with this infirmity of poor Salvator, and pampering him into a second Michael Angelo. The truth is, that the judgment passed upon him by his contemporaries was right in this respect. He was a great landscape painter; but his histories were comparatively forced and abortive. If this had been merely the opinion of his enemies, it might have been attributed to envy and faction; but it was no less the deliberate sentiment of his friends and most enthusiastic partisans; and if we reflect on the nature of our artist's genius or his temper, we shall find that it could not well have been otherwise. This from a child was wayward, indocile, wild and irregular, unshackled, impatient of restraint, and urged on equally by success or opposition into a state of jealous and morbid irritability. Those who are at war with others, are not at peace with themselves. It is the uneasiness, the turbulence, the acrimony within that recoils upon external objects. Barry abused the Academy, because he could not paint himself. If he could have painted up to his own *idea* of perfection, he would have thought this better than exposing the ill-directed efforts or groundless pretensions of others. Salvator was rejected by the Academy of St. Luke, and excluded, in consequence of his hostility to reigning authorities, and his unlicensed freedom of speech, from the great works and public buildings in Rome; and though he scorned and ridiculed those by whose influence this was effected, yet neither the smiles of friends and fortune, nor the flatteries of fame, which in his lifetime had spread his name over Europe, and might be confidently expected to extend it to a future age, could console him for the loss, which he affected to despise, and would make no sacrifice to obtain. He was indeed hard to please. He denounced his rivals and maligners with bitterness; and with difficulty tolerated the enthusiasm of his disciples, or the services of his patrons. He was at all times full of indignation, with or without cause. He was easily exasperated, and not willing soon to be appeased, or to subside into repose and good humour again. He slighted what he did best; and seemed anxious to go out of himself. In a word, irritability rather than sensibility, was the category of his mind: he was more distinguished by violence and restlessness of will, than by dignity or power of thought. The truly great, on the contrary, are sufficient to themselves, and so far satisfied with the world. 'Their mind to them is a kingdom,' from which they look out, as from a high watchtower or noble fortress, on the passions, the cabals, the meannesses and follies of mankind. They shut themselves up 'in measureless content;' or soar to the great, discarding the little; and appeal from envious detraction or 'unjust tribunals under change of times,' to posterity. They are not satirists, cynics, nor the prey of these; but painters, poets, and philosophers.

Salvator was the victim of a too morbid sensibility, or of early difficulty and disappointment. He was always quarrelling with the world, and lay at the mercy of his own piques and resentments. But antipathy, the spirit of contradiction, captious discontent, fretful impatience, produce nothing fine in character, neither dwell on beauty, nor pursue truth, nor rise into sublimity. The splenetic humourist is not the painter of humanity. Landscape painting is the obvious resource of misanthropy. Our artist, escaping from the herd of knaves and fools, sought out some rude solitude, and found repose there. Teased by the impertinence, stung to the quick by the injustice of mankind, the presence of the works of nature would be a relief to his mind, and would, by contrast, stamp her striking features more strongly there. In the coolness, in the silence, in the untamed wildness of mountain scenery, in the lawless manners of its inhabitants, he would forget the fever and the anguish, and the artificial restraints of society. We accordingly do not find in Salvator's rural scenes either natural beauty or fertility, or even the simply grand; but whatever seizes attention by presenting a barrier to the will, or scorning the power of mankind, or snapping asunder the chain that binds us to the kind—the barren, the abrupt, wild steril regions, the steep rock, the mountain torrent, the bandit's cave, the hermit's cell,—all these, while they released him from more harassing and painful reflections, soothed his moody spirit with congenial gloom, and found a sanctuary and a home there. Not only is there a corresponding determination and singleness of design in his landscapes (excluding every approach to softness, or pleasure, or ornament), but the strength of the impression is confirmed even by the very touch and mode of handling; he brings us in contact with the objects he paints; and the sharpness of a rock, the roughness of the bark of a tree, or the ruggedness of a mountain path are marked in the freedom, the boldness, and firmness of his pencilling. There is not in Salvator's scenes the luxuriant beauty and divine harmony of Claude, nor the amplitude of Nicolas Poussin, nor the gorgeous richness of Titian—but there is a deeper seclusion, a more abrupt and total escape from society, more savage wildness and grotesqueness of form, a more earthy texture, a fresher atmosphere, and a more obstinate resistance to all the effeminate refinements of art. Salvator Rosa then is, beyond all question, the most *romantic* of landscape painters; because the very violence and untractableness of his temper threw him with instinctive force upon those objects in nature which would be most likely to sooth and disarm it; while, in history, he is little else than a caricaturist (we mean compared with such men as Raphael, Michael Angelo, &c.), because the same acrimony and impatience have made him fasten on

those subjects and aspects of the human mind which would most irritate and increase it; and he has, in this department, produced chiefly distortion and deformity, sullenness and rage, extravagance, squalidness, and poverty of appearance. But it is time to break off this long and premature digression, into which our love of justice and of the arts (which requires, above all, that no more than justice should be done to any one) had led us, and return to the elegant but somewhat fanciful specimen of biography before us. Lady Morgan (in her flattery of the dead, the most ill-timed and unprofitable, but least disgusting of all flattery) has spoken of the historical compositions of Salvator in terms that leave no distinction between him and Michael Angelo; and we could not refrain from entering our protest against such an inference, and thus commencing our account of her book with what may appear at once a piece of churlish criticism and a want of gallantry.

The materials of the first volume, containing the account of Salvator's outset in life, and early struggles with fortune and his art, are slender, but spun out at great length, and steeped in very brilliant dyes. The contents of the second volume, which relates to a period when he was before the public, was in habits of personal intimacy with his future biographers, and made frequent mention of himself in letters to his friends which are still preserved, are more copious and authentic, and on that account—however Lady Morgan may wonder at it—more interesting. Of the artist's infant years, little is known, and little told; but that little is conveyed with all the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious' authorship. It is said, that the whole matter composing the universe might be compressed in a nutshell, taking away the porous interstices and flimsy appearances: So, we apprehend, that all that is really to be learnt of the subject of these Memoirs from the first volume of his life, might be contained in a single page of solid writing.

It appears that our artist was born in 1615, of poor parents, in the Borgo de Renella, near Naples. His father, Vito Antonio Rosa, was an architect and landsurveyor, and his mother's name was Giulia Grecca, who had also two daughters. Salvator very soon lost his full baptismal name for the nickname of Salvatoriello, in consequence of his mischievous tricks and lively gesticulations when a boy, or, more probably, this was the common diminutive of it given to all children. He was intended by his parents for the church, but early showed a truant disposition, and a turn for music and drawing. He used to scrawl with burnt sticks on the walls of his bedroom, and contrived to be caught in the fact of sketching outlines on the chapel-walls of the Certosa, when some priests were going by to mass, for

which he was severely whipped. He was then sent to school at the monastery of the *Somasco* in Naples, where he remained for two years, and laid in a good stock of classical learning, of which he made great use in his after life, both in his poems and pictures. Salvator's first knowledge of painting was imbibed in the workshop of Francesco Francanzani (a painter at that time of some note in Naples), who had married one of his sisters, and under whose eye he began his professional studies. Soon after this he is supposed to have made a tour through the mountains of the Abruzzi, and to have been detained a prisoner by the banditti there. On the death of his father, he endeavoured to maintain his family by sketches in landscape or history, which he sold to the brokers in Naples, and one of these (his *Hagar in the Wilderness*), was noticed and purchased by the celebrated Lanfranco, who was passing the broker's shop in his carriage. Salvator finding it in vain to struggle any longer with chagrin and poverty in his native place, went to Rome, where he met with little encouragement, and fell sick, and once more returned to Naples. An accident, or rather the friendship of an old school-fellow, now introduced him into the suite of the Cardinal Brancaccia, and his picture of Prometheus brought him into general notice, and recalled him to Rome. About the same time, he appeared in the Carnival with prodigious *eclat* as an *improvisatore* and comic actor; and from this period may be dated the commencement of his public life as a painter, a satirist, and a man of general talents.

Except on these few tangible points the Manuscript yawns dreadfully; but Lady Morgan, whose wit or courage never flags, fills up the hollow spaces, and 'skins and films the *missing* part,' with an endless and dazzling profusion of digressions, invectives, and hypotheses. It is with pleasure that we give a specimen of the way in which she thus magnifies trifles, and enlarges on the possibilities of her subject. Salvator was born in 1615. As the birth of princes is announced by the discharge of artillery and the exhibition of fireworks, her ladyship thinks proper to usher in the birth of her hero with the following explosion of imagery and declamation.

'The sweeping semicircle which the most fantastic and singular city of Naples marks on the shore of its unrivalled bay, from the Capo di Pausilippo to the Torrione del Carmine, is dominated by a lofty chain of undulating hills, which take their distinctive appellations from some local peculiarity or classical tradition. The high and insulated rock of St. Elmo, which overtops the whole, is crowned by that terrible fortress to which it gives its name—a fearful and impregnable citadel, that, since the first moment when it was raised by an Austrian conqueror to the present day, when it is garrisoned

by a Bourbon with Austrian troops, has poured down the thunder of its artillery to support the violence, or proclaim the triumphs of foreign interference over the rights and liberties of a long-suffering and oft-resisting people.

'Swelling from the base of the savage St. Elmo, smile the lovely heights of *San Martino*, where, through chestnut woods and vineyards, gleam the golden spires of the monastic palace of the Monks of the Certosa.[1] A defile cut through the rocks of the *Monte Donzelle*, and shaded by the dark pines which spring from their crevices, forms an umbrageous pathway from this superb convent to the *Borgeo di Renella*, the little capital of a neighbouring hill, which, for the peculiar beauty of its position, and the views it commands, is still called "*l'ameno villaggio.*" At night the fires of Vesuvius almost bronze the humble edifices of Renella; and the morning sun, as it rises, discovers from various points, the hills of Vomiro and Pausilippo, the shores of Puzzuoli and of Baiæ, the islets of Nisiti, Capri, and Procida, till the view fades into the extreme verge of the horizon, where the waters of the Mediterranean seem to mingle with those clear skies whose tint and lustre they reflect.

'In this true "*nido paterno*" of genius, there dwelt, in the year 1615, an humble and industrious artist called Vito Antonia Rosa—a name even then not unknown to the arts, though as yet more known than prosperous. Its actual possessor, the worthy Messire Antonio, had, up to this time, struggled with his good wife Giulia Grecca and two daughters still in childhood, to maintain the ancient respectability of his family. Antonio was an architect and landsurveyor of some note, but of little gains; and if, over the old architectural portico of the Casaccia of Renella might be read,

"*Vito Antonio Rosa, Agremensore ed Architecto*;"

the intimation was given in vain! Few passed through the decayed Borgo of Renella, and still fewer, in times so fearful, were able to profit by the talents and profession which the inscription advertised. The family of Rosa, inconsiderable as it was, partook of the pressure of the times; and the pretty Borgo, like its adjacent scenery, (no longer the haunt of Consular voluptuaries, neither frequented by the great nor visited by the curious) stood lonely and beautiful—unencumbered by those fantastic *belvideras* and grotesque pavilions,

[1] 'The pavilions of the Caliphs of Bagdad were not so deliciously placed, nor so sumptuously raised, as this retreat of the self-denying brotherhood of the Certosa. It was founded in the fourteenth century by Charles, son of Robert of Arragon, King of Naples.'

which in modern times rather deform than beautify a site, for which Nature has done all, and Art can do nothing.

'The cells of the Certosa, indeed, had their usual complement of lazy monks and "*Frati conversi.*" The fortress of St. Elmo, then as now, manned by Austrian troops, glittered with foreign pikes. The cross rose on every acclivity, and the sword guarded every pass: but the villages of Renella and San Martino, of the Vomiro and of Pausilippo, were thinned of their inhabitants to recruit foreign armies; and this earthly paradise was dreary as the desert, and silent as the tomb.

'The Neapolitan barons, those restless but brave feudatories, whose resistance to their native despots preserved something of the ancient republican spirit of their Greek predecessors, now fled from the capital. They left its beautiful environs to Spanish viceroys, and to their official underlings; and sullenly shut themselves up in their domestic fortesses of the Abruzzi or of Calabria. "La Civilta," a class then including the whole of the middle and professional ranks of society of Naples, was struggling for a bare existence in the towns and cities. Beggared by taxation levied at the will of their despots, and collected with every aggravation of violence, its members lived under the perpetual *surveillance* of foreign troops and domestic *sbirri*, whose suspicions their brooding discontents were well calculated to nourish.

'The people—the debased, degraded people—had reached that maximum of suffering beyond which human endurance cannot go. They were famished in the midst of plenty, and, in regions the most genial and salubrious, were dying of diseases, the fearful attendants on want. Commerce was at a stand, agriculture was neglected, and the arts, under the perpetual dictatorship of a Spanish court-painter, had no favour but for the *Seguaci* of Lo Spagnuoletto.

'In such times of general distress and oppression, when few had the means or the spirit to build, and still fewer had lands to measure or property to transfer, it is little wonderful that the humble architect and landsurveyor of Renella,' &c.

And so she gets down to the humble parentage of her hero; and after telling us that his father was chiefly anxious that he should *not* be an artist, and that both parents resolved to dedicate him to religion, she proceeds to record, that he gave little heed to his future vocation, but manifested various signs of a disposition for all the fine arts. This occasioned considerable uneasiness and opposition on the part of those who had destined him to something very different; and 'the cord of paternal authority, drawn to its extreme tension, was naturally snapped.'—And upon this her volatile pen again takes *its roving flight.*

'The truant Salvatoriello fled from the restraints of an uncongenial home, from Albert Le Grand and Santa Caterina di Sienna, and took shelter among those sites and scenes whose imagery soon became a part of his own intellectual existence, and were received as impressions long before they were studied as subjects. Sometimes he was discovered by the *Padre Cercatore* of the convent of Renella, among the rocks and caverns of Baiæ, the ruined temples of Gods, and the haunts of Sibyls. Sometimes he was found by a gossip of Madonna Giulia, in her pilgrimage to a "*maesta*," sleeping among the wastes of the Solfatara, beneath the scorched branches of a blasted tree, his head pillowed by lava, and his dream most probably the vision of an infant poet's slumbers. For even then he was

"the youngest he
That sat in shadow of Apollo's tree,"

seeing Nature with a poet's eye, and sketching her beauties with a painter's hand.' p. 45.

Now this is well imagined and quaintly expressed; it pleases the fair writer, and should offend nobody else. But we cannot say quite so much of the note which is appended to it, and couched in the following terms.

'Rosa drew his first impressions from the magnificent scenery of Pausilippo and Vesuvius; Hogarth found his in a pot-house at Highgate, where a drunken quarrel and a broken nose "first woke the God within him." Both, however, reached the sublime in their respective vocations—Hogarth in the grotesque, and Salvator in the majestic!'

Really these critics who have crossed the Alps do take liberties with the rest of the world,—and do not recover from a certain giddiness ever after. In the eagerness of partisanship, the fair author here falsifies the class to which these two painters belonged. Hogarth did *not* excel in the 'grotesque,' but in the ludicrous and natural,—nor Salvator in the 'majestic,' but in the wild and gloomy features of man or nature; and in talent Hogarth had the advantage—a million to one. It would not be too much to say, that he was probably the greatest observer of manners, and the greatest comic genius, that ever lived. We know no one, whether painter, poet, or prose-writer, not even Shakspeare, who, in his peculiar department, was so teeming with life and invention, so over-informed with matter, so 'full to overflowing,' as Hogarth was. We shall not attempt to calculate the quantity of pleasure and amusement his pictures have afforded, for it is quite incalculable. As to the distinction between 'high and low'

in matters of genius, we shall leave it to her Ladyship's other critics. But shall Hogarth's world of truth and nature (his huge total farce of human life) be reduced to 'a drunken quarrel and a broken nose?' We will not retort this sneer by any insult to Salvator; he did not paint his pictures in opposition to Hogarth. There is an air about his landscapes sacred to our imaginations, though different from the close atmosphere of Hogarth's scenes; and not the less so, because the latter could paint something better than 'a broken nose.' Nothing provokes us more than these exclusive and invidious comparisons, which seek to raise one man of genius by setting down another, and which suppose that there is nothing to admire in the greatest talents, unless they can be made a foil to bring out the weak points or nominal imperfections of some fancied rival.

We might transcribe, for the entertainment of the reader, the passage to which we have already referred, describing Salvator's departure, in the company of his father, for the college of the *Congregazione Somasco*; but we prefer one which, though highly coloured and somewhat dramatic, is more to our purpose—the commencement of Salvator's studies as an artist under his brother-in-law Francanzani. We cannot, however, do this at once: for, in endeavouring to lay our hands upon the passage, we were as usual intercepted by showers of roses and clouds of perfume. Lady Morgan's style resembles 'another morn risen on mid-noon.' We must make a career therefore with the historian, and reach the temple of painting through the sounding portico of music. It appears that Salvator, after he left the brotherhood of the *Somasco*, with more poetry than logic in his head, devoted himself to music; and Lady Morgan preludes her narration with the following eloquent passage.

'All Naples—(where even to this day love and melody make a part of the existence of the people)—all Naples was then resounding to guitars, lutes and harps, accompanying voices, which forever sang the fashionable *canzoni* of Cambio Donato, and of the Prince di Venusa.[1] Neither German phlegm, nor Spanish gloom, could subdue spirits so tuned to harmony, nor silence the passionate *serenatas* which floated along the shores, and reverberated among the classic grottoes of Pausilippo. Vesuvius blazed, St. Elmo thundered from its heights, conspiracy brooded in the caves of Baiæ, and tyranny tortured its victim in the dungeons of the Castello Nuovo; yet still the ardent

[1] Evelyn, who visited Naples about this time, observes that 'the country people are so jovial and so addicted to music, that the very husbandmen almost universally play on the guitar, singing and accompanying songs in praise of their sweethearts, and will commonly go to the field with their fiddle. They are merry, witty, and genial, all of which I attribute to their ayre.'—*Memoirs*, vol. i.

Neapolitans, amidst all the horrors of their social and political *position*,[1] could snatch moments of blessed forgetfulness, and, reckless of their country's woes and their own degradation, could give up hours to love and music, which were already numbered in the death-warrants of their tyrants. . . . It was at this moment, when peculiar circumstances were awakening in the region of the syrens "the hidden soul of harmony," when the most beautiful women of the capital and the court gave a public exhibition of their talents and *their charms*, and glided in their feluccas on the moonlight midnight seas, with harps of gold and hands of snow, that the contumacious students of the *Padri Somaschi* escaped from the restraints of their cloisters, and the horrid howl of their *laude spirituali*, to all the intoxication of sound and sight, with every sense in full accordance with the musical passion of the day. It is little wonderful, if, at this epoch of his life, Salvator gave himself up unresistingly to the pursuit of a science, which he cultivated with ardour, even when time had preached his tumultuous pulse to rest; or if the floating capital of genius, which was as yet unappropriated, was in part applied to that species of composition, which, in the youth of man as of nations, precedes deeper and more important studies, and for which, in either, there is but one age. All poetry and passion, his young Muse "dallied with the innocence of love;" and inspired strains, which, though the simple breathings of an ardent temperament, the exuberance of youthful excitement, and an overteeming sensibility, were assigning him a place among the first Italian lyrists of his age. Little did he then dream that posterity would apply the rigid rules of criticism to the "idle visions" of his boyish fancy; or that his bars and basses would be conned and analyzed by the learned umpires of future ages—declared "not only admirable for a *dilettante*, but, in point of melody, superior to that of most of the masters of his time."[2]

. . . . . .

'It happened at this careless, gay, but not idle period of Salvator's life, than an event occurred which hurried on his vocation to that art, to which his parents were so determined that he should *not* addict

[1] 'Among the women were the Signorine Leonora and Caterina, 'who were never heard but with rapture' (says Della Valle, a contemporary of Salvator, in speaking of the female musicians of this time) 'particularly the elder who accompanied herself on the arch lute. I remember their mother in her youth, when she sailed in her felucca near the grotto of Pausilippo, with her golden harp in her hand; but in our times these shores were inhabited by syrens, not only beautiful and tuneful, but virtuous and beneficent.'

[2] Burney's History of Music. Dr. Burney purchased an old music book of Salvator's compositions, of his granddaughter, in 1773, and brought it over with him to England.

himself, but to which Nature had so powerfully directed him. His probation of adolescence was passed: his hour was come; and he was about to approach that temple whose threshold he modestly and poetically declared himself unworthy to pass.

> "Del immortalide al tempio augusto
> Dove serba la gloria e i suoi tesori."

'At one of the popular festivities annually celebrated at Naples in honour of the Madonna, the beauty of Rosa's elder sister captivated the attention of a young painter, who, though through life unknown to "fortune," was not even then "unknown to fame." The celebrated and unfortunate Francesco Francanzani, the inamorata of La Signorina Rosa, was a distinguished pupil of the Spagnuoletto school; and his picture of San Giuseppe, for the Chiesa Pellegrini, had already established him as one of the first painters of his day. Francanzani, like most of the young Neapolitan painters of his time, was a turbulent and factious character, vain and self-opinionated; and, though there was in his works a certain grandeur of style, with great force and depth of colouring, yet the impatience of his disappointed ambition, and indignation at the neglect of his acknowledged merit, already rendered him reckless of public opinion.[1]

'It was the peculiar vanity of the painters of that day to have beautiful wives. Albano had set the example'—[as if any example need be set, or the thing had been done in concert]—'Domenichino followed it to his cost; Rubens turned it to the account of his profession; and Francanzani, still poor and struggling, married the portionless daughter of the most indigent artist in Naples, and thought perhaps more of the model than the wife. This union, and, still more, a certain sympathy in talent and character between the brothers-in-law, frequently carried Salvator to the *stanza* or work-room of Francesco. Francesco, by some years the elder, was then deep in the faction and intrigues of the Neapolitan school; and was endowed with that bold eloquence, which, displayed upon bold occasions, is always so captivating to young auditors. It was at the foot of his kinsman's easel, and listening to details which laid perhaps the foundation of that contemptuous opinion he cherished through life for schools, academies, and all incorporated pedantry and pretension,[2] that Salvator occasionally amused himself in copying, on any scrap of *board* or paper

[1] He was thrown into gaol and executed, for his concern in some desperate enterprise.

[2] Why so? Was it not said just before, that this painter was deep in the Neapolitan school? But Lady Morgan will have it so, and we cannot contradict her.

which fell in his way, whatever pleased him in Francesco's pictures. His long-latent genius thus accidentally awakened, resembled the *acqua buja*, whose cold and placid surface kindles like spirits on the contact of a spark. In these first, rude, and hasty sketches, Francanzani, as Passeri informs us, saw "*molti segni d'un indole spirituosa*" (great signs of talent and genius); and he frequently encouraged, and sometimes corrected, the copies *which so nearly approached the originals*. But Salvator, who was destined to imitate none, but to be imitated by many, soon grew impatient of repeating another's conceptions, and of following in an art in which he already perhaps felt, with prophetic throes, that he was born to lead. His visits to the workshop of Francanzani grew less frequent; his days were given to the scenes of his infant wanderings; he departed with the dawn, laden with his portfolio filled with primed paper, and a pallet covered with oil colours; and it is said, that even then he not only sketched, but coloured from nature. When the pedantry of criticism (at the suggestion of envious rivals) accused him of having acquired, in his colouring, too much of the *impasting* of the *Spagnuoletto* school, it was not aware that his faults, like his beauties, were original; and that he sinned against the rules of art, only because he adhered too faithfully to nature.'—[Salvator's flesh colour is as remarkably dingy and *Spagnuolettish*, as the tone of his landscapes is fresh and clear.]—'Returning from these arduous but not profitless rambles, through wildernesses and along precipices, impervious to all save the enterprise of fearless genius, he sought shelter beneath his sister's roof, where a kinder welcome awaited him than he could find in that home where it had been decreed from his birth that *he should not be a painter*.

'Francanzani was wont, on the arrival of his brother-in-law, to rifle the contents of his portfolio; and he frequently found there compositions hastily thrown together, but selected, drawn, and coloured with a boldness and a breadth, which indicated the confidence of a genius sure of itself. The first accents of "the thrilling melody of sweet renown" which ever vibrated to the heart of Salvator, came to his ear on these occasions in the Neapolitan *patois* of his relation, who, in glancing by lamp-light over his labours, would pat him smilingly on the head, and exclaim, "*Fruscia, fruscia, Salvatoriello—che va buono*," ("Go on, go on, this is good")—simple plaudits! but frequently remembered in aftertimes (when the dome of the Pantheon had already rung with the admiration extorted by his Regulus) as the first which cheered him in his arduous progress.' p. 94.

The reader cannot fail to observe here how well every thing is

made out: how agreeably every thing is assumed: how difficulties are smoothed over, little abruptnesses rounded off: how each circumstance falls into its place just as it should, and answers to a preconceived idea, like the march of a verse or the measure of a dance: and how completely that imaginary justice is everywhere done to the subject, which, according to Lord Bacon, gives poetry so decided an advantage over history! Yet this is one of our fair authoress's most severe and literal passages. Her prose-Muse is furnished with wings; and the breeze of Fancy carries her off her feet from the plain ground of matter-of-fact, whether she will or no. Lady Morgan, in this part of her subject, takes occasion to animadvert on an opinion of Sir Joshua's respecting our artist's choice of a particular style of landscape painting.

'*Salvator Rosa*,' says Sir J. Reynolds, '*saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired of Claude Lorraine's and G. Poussin's long train of imitators.*'

'*Salvator therefore struck into a wild, savage kind of nature, which was new and striking.*'

'The first of these paragraphs contains a strange anachronism. When Salvator *struck into a new line*, Poussin and Claude, who, though his elders, were his contemporaries, had as yet no train of imitators. The one was struggling for a livelihood in France, the other was cooking and grinding colours for his master at Rome. Salvator's early attachment to Nature in her least imitated forms, was not the result of speculation having any reference to the public: it was the operation of original genius, and of those particular tendencies which seemed to be breathed into his soul at the moment it first quickened. From his cradle to his tomb he was the creature of impulse, and the slave of his own vehement volitions.'—*Note*, p. 97-8.

We think this is spirited and just. Sir Joshua, who borrowed from almost all his predecessors in art, was now and then a little too ready to detract from them. We dislike these attempts to explain away successful talent into a species of studied imposture—to attribute genius to a plot, originality to a trick. Burke, in like manner, accused Rousseau of the same kind of *malice prepense* in bringing forward his paradoxes—as if he did it on a theory, or to astonish the public, and not to give vent to his peculiar humours and singularity of temperament.

We next meet with a poetical version of a picturesque tour undertaken by Salvator among the mountains of the Abruzzi, and of his detention by the banditti there. We have much fine writing on the subject; but after a world of charming theories and romantic conjectures, it is left quite doubtful whether this last event ever took

place at all—at least we could wish there was some better confirmation of it than a vague rumour, and an etching by Salvator of a '*Youth taken captive by banditti, with a female figure pleading his cause*,' which the historian at once identifies with the adventures of the artist himself, and 'moralizes into a thousand similes.' We are indemnified for the dearth of satisfactory evidence on this point by animated and graceful transitions to the history and manners of the Neapolitan banditti, their physiognomical distinctions and political intrigues, to the grand features of mountain scenery, and to the character of Salvator's style, founded on all these exciting circumstances, real or imaginary. On the death of his father, Vito Antonio, which happened when he was about seventeen, the family were thrown on his hands for support, and he struggled for some time with want and misery, which he endeavoured to relieve by his hard bargains with the *rivenditori* (picture-dealers) in the *Strada della Carità*, till necessity and chagrin forced him to fly to Rome. The purchase of his *Hagar* by Lanfranco is the only bright streak in this period of his life, which cheered him for a moment with faint delusive hope.

The art of writing may be said to consist in thinking of nothing but one's subject: the art of book-making, on the contrary, can only subsist on the principle of laying hands on every thing that can supply the place of it. The author of the 'Life and Times of Salvator Rosa,' though devoted to her hero, does not scruple to leave him sometimes, and to occupy many pages with his celebrated contemporaries, Domenichino, Lanfranco, Caravaggio, and the sculptor Bernini, the most splendid coxcomb in the history of art, and the spoiled child of vanity and patronage. Before we take leave of Naples, we must introduce our readers to some of this good company, and pay our court in person. We shall begin with Caravaggio, one of the *characteristic* school both in mind and manners. The account is too striking in many respects to be passed over, and affords a fine lesson on the excesses and untamed irregularities of men of genius.

'In the early part of the seventeenth century, the manner of the Neapolitan school was purely *Caravaggesque*. Michael Angelo Amoreghi, better known as *Il Caravaggio* (from the place of his birth in the Milanese, where his father held no higher rank than that of a stone mason), was one of those powerful and extraordinary geniuses which are destined by their force and originality to influence public taste, and master public opinion, in whatever line they start. The Roman School, to which the almost celestial genius of Raphael had so long been as a tutelary angel, sinking rapidly into degradation and feebleness, suddenly arose again under the influence of a new chief, whose professional talent and personal character stood opposed

in the strong relief of contrast to that of his elegant and poetical predecessor.

'The influence of this "*uomo intractabile e brutale*," this *passionate and intractable man*, as he is termed by an Italian historian of the arts, sprang from the depression of the school which preceded him. Nothing less than the impulsion given by the force of contrast, and the shock occasioned by a violent change, could have produced an effect on the sinking art such as proceeded from the strength and even coarseness of Caravaggio. He brought back nature triumphant over mannerism—nature, indeed, in all the exaggeration of strong motive and overbearing volition; but still it *was* nature; and his bold example dissipated the languor of exhausted imitation, and gave excitement even to the tamest mediocrity and the feeblest conception. . . . When on his first arrival in Rome (says Bellori) the *cognoscenti* advised him to study from the antiques, and take Raphael as his model, he used to point to the promiscuous groups of men and women passing before him, and say, "those were the models and the masters provided him by Nature." Teased one day by a pedant on the subject, he stopped a gipsey-girl who was passing by his window, called her in, placed her near his easel, and produced his splendid *Zingara in atto di predire l'avventure*, his well-known and exquisite Egyptian Fortune-teller. His *Gamblers* was done in the same manner.

'The temperament which produced this peculiar genius was necessarily violent and gloomy. Caravaggio tyrannized over his school, and attacked his rivals with other arms than those of his art. He was a professed duellist; and having killed one of his antagonists in a rencontre, he fled to Naples, where an asylum was readily granted him. His manner as a painter, his character as a man, were both calculated to succeed with the Neapolitan school; and the *maniera Caravaggesca* thenceforward continued to distinguish its productions, till the art, there, as throughout all Europe, fell into utter degradation, and became lost almost as completely as it had been under the Lower Empire.

'In a warm dispute with one of his own young friends in a tennis-court, he had struck him dead with a racket, having been himself severely wounded. Notwithstanding the triumphs with which he was loaded in Naples, where he executed some of his finest pictures, he soon got weary of his residence there, and went to Malta. His superb picture of the Grand Master obtained for him the cross of Malta, a rich golden chain, placed on his neck by the Grand Master's own hands, and two slaves to attend him. But all these honours did not prevent the new knight from falling into his old

habits. *Il suo torbido ingegno*, says Bellori, plunged him into new difficulties; he fought and wounded a noble cavalier, was thrown into prison by the Grand Master, escaped most miraculously, fled to Syracuse, and obtained the suffrages of the Syracusans by painting his splendid picture of the *Santa Morte*, for the church of Santa Lucia. In apprehension of being taken by the Maltese knights, he fled to Messina, from thence to Palermo, and returned to Naples, where hopes were given him of the Pope's pardon. Here, picking a quarrel with some military men at an inn door, he was wounded, took refuge on board a felucca, and set sail for Rome. Arrested by a Spanish guard, at a little port (where the felucca cast anchor), by mistake, for another person, when released he found the felucca gone, and in it all his property. Traversing the burning shore under a vertical sun, he was seized with a brain-fever, and continued to wander through the deserts of the Pontine Marshes, till he arrived at Porto Ercoli, when he expired in his fortieth year.' p. 139.

We have seen some of the particulars differently related; but this account is as probable as any; and it conveys a startling picture of the fate of a man led away by headstrong passions and the pride of talents,—an intellectual outlaw, having no regard to the charities of life, nor knowledge of his own place in the general scale of being. How different, how superior, and yet how little more fortunate, was the amiable and accomplished Domenichino (the 'most sensible of painters'), who was about this time employed in painting the dome of St. Januarius!

'Domenichino reluctantly accepted the invitation (1629); and he arrived in Naples with the zeal of a martyr devoted to a great cause, but with a melancholy foreboding, which harassed his noble spirit, and but ill prepared him for the persecution he was to encounter. Lodged under the special protection of the *Deputati*, in the *Palazzo dell' Arcivescovato*, adjoining the church, on going forth from his sumptuous dwelling the day after his arrival, he found a paper addressed to him sticking in the key-hole of his anteroom. It informed him, that if he did not instantly return to Rome, he should never return there with life. Domenichino immediately presented himself to the Spanish viceroy, the *Conte Monterei*, and claimed protection for a life then employed in the service of the church. The piety of the count, in spite of his partiality to the faction [of Spagnuoletto], induced him to pledge the word of a grandee of Spain, that Domenichino should not be molested; and from that moment a life, no longer openly assailed, was embittered by all that the littleness of malignant envy could invent to undermine its enjoyments and blast its hopes. Calumnies against his character, criticisms on his paintings,

ashes mixed with his colours, and anonymous letters, were the miserable means to which his rivals resorted; and to complete their work of malignity, they induced the viceroy to order pictures from him for the Court of Madrid; and when these were little more than laid in in dead colours, they were carried to the viceregal palace, and placed in the hands of Spagnuoletto to retouch and alter at pleasure. In this disfigured and mutilated condition, they were despatched to the gallery of the King of Spain. Thus drawn from his great works by despotic authority, for the purpose of effecting his ruin, enduring the complaints of the *Deputati*, who saw their commission neglected, and suffering from perpetual calumnies and persecutions, Domenichino left the superb picture of the *Martyrdom of San Gennaro*, which is now receiving the homage of posterity, and fled to Rome; taking shelter in the solemn shades of Frescati, where he resided some time under the protection of Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini. It was at this period that Domenichino was visited by his biographer Passeri, then an obscure youth, engaged to assist in the repairs of the pictures in the cardinal's chapel. "When we arrived at Frescati," says Passeri in his simple style, "Domenichino received me with much courtesy; and hearing that I took a singular delight in the belles-lettres, it increased his kindness to me. I remember me, that I gazed on this man as though he were an angel. I remained till the end of September, occupied in restoring the chapel of St. Sebastian, which had been ruined by the damp. Sometimes Domenichino would join us, singing delightfully to recreate himself as well as he could. When night set in we returned to our apartment, while he most frequently remained in his own, occupied in drawing, and permitting none to see him. Sometimes, however, to pass the time, he drew caricatures of us all, and of the inhabitants of the villa; and when he succeeded to his satisfaction, he was wont to indulge in immoderate fits of laughter; and we, who were in the adjoining room, would run in to know his reason, and then he showed us his spirited sketches (*spiritose galanterie*). He drew a caricature of me with a guitar, one of Canini the painter, and one of the guarda roba, who was lame with the gout, and of the subguarda roba, a most ridiculous figure. To prevent our being offended, he also caricatured himself. These portraits are now preserved by Signor Giovanni Pietro Bellori in his study." *Vita di Domenichino.*—Obliged, however, at length, to return to Naples to fulfil his fatal engagements, overwhelmed both in mind and body by the persecutions of his *soi-disant* patrons and his open enemies, he died, says Passeri, "*fra mille crepacuori*," amidst a *thousand heart-breakings*, with some suspicion of having been poisoned, in 1641.' p. 150.

We could wish Lady Morgan had preserved more of this *simple*

style of Passeri. We confess we prefer it to her own more brilliant and artificial one; for instance, to such passages as the following, describing Salvator's first entrance into the city of Rome.

'In entering the greatest city of the world at the Ave Maria, the hour of Italian recreation'—(Why must he have entered it at this hour, except for the purpose of giving the author an apology for the following eloquent reflections?)—'in passing from the silent desolate suburbs of San Giovanni to the Corso (then a place of crowded and populous resort), where the princes of the Conclave presented themselves in all the pomp and splendour of Oriental satraps, the feelings of the young and solitary stranger must have suffered a revulsion, in the consciousness of his own misery. Never, perhaps, in the deserts of the Abruzzi, in the solitudes of Otranto, or in the ruins of Pæstum, did Salvator experience sensations of such utter loneliness, as in the midst of this gaudy and multitudinous assemblage; for in the history of melancholy *sensations* there are few comparable to that *sense* of *isolation*, to that *desolateness* of soul, which accompanies the first entrance of the friendless on a world where all, save they, have ties, pursuits, and homes.' p. 174.

When we come to passages like this, so buoyant, so airy, and so brilliant, we wish we could forget that history is not a pure voluntary effusion of sentiment, and that we could fancy ourselves reading a page of Mrs. Radcliffe's Italian, or Miss Porter's Thaddeus of Warsaw! Presently after, we learn, that 'Milton and Salvator, who, in genius, character, and political views, bore no faint resemblance to each other, though living at the same time both in Rome and Naples, remained mutually unknown. The obscure and indigent young painter had, doubtless, no means of presenting himself to the great republican poet of England;—if, indeed, he had then ever heard of one so destined to illustrate the age in which both flourished.' —p. 176. This is the least apposite of all our author's critical juxtapositions; if we except the continual running parallel between Salvator, Shakspeare, and Lord Byron, as the three demons of the imagination personified. Modern critics can no more confer rank in the lists of fame, than modern heralds can confound new and old nobility.

Salvator's first decided success at Rome, or in his profession, was in his picture of Prometheus, exhibited in the Pantheon, when he was little more than twenty, and which stamped his reputation as an artist from that time forward, though it did not lay the immediate foundation of his fortune. In this respect, his rejection by the Academy of St. Luke, and the hostility of Bernini, threw very considerable obstacles in his way. Lady Morgan celebrates the

success of this picture at sufficient length, and with enthusiastic sympathy, and accompanies the successive completion of his great historical efforts afterwards, the *Regulus*, the *Purgatory*, the *Job*, the *Saul*, and the *Conspiracy of Catiline*, with appropriate comments; but, as we are tainted with heresy on this subject, we shall decline entering into it, farther than to say generally, that we think the colouring of Salvator's flesh dingy, his drawing meagre, his expressions coarse or violent, and his choice of subjects morose and monotonous. The figures in his landscape-compositions are admirable for their spirit, force, wild interest, and daring character; but, in our judgment, they cannot stand alone as high history, nor, by any means, claim the first rank among epic or dramatic productions. His landscapes, on the contrary, as we have said before, have a boldness of conception, a unity of design, and felicity of execution, which, if it does not fill the mind with the highest sense of beauty or grandeur, assigns them a place by themselves, which invidious comparison cannot approach or divide with any competitor. They are original and *perfect* in their kind; and that kind is one that the imagination requires for its solace and support; is always glad to return to, and is never ashamed of, the wild and abstracted scenes of nature. Having said thus much by way of explanation, we hope we shall be excused from going farther into the details of an obnoxious hypercriticism, to which we feel an equal repugnance as professed worshippers of fame and genius! Our readers will prefer, to our sour and fastidious (perhaps perverse) criticism, the lively account which is here given of Salvator's first appearance in a new character—one of the masks of the Roman carnival—which had considerable influence in his subsequent pursuits and success in life.

'Towards the close of the Carnival in 1639, when the spirits of the revellers (as is always the case in Rome) were making a brilliant rally for the representations of the last week, a car, or stage, highly ornamented, drawn by oxen, and occupied by a masked troop, attracted universal attention by its novelty and singular representations. The principal personage announced himself as a certain Signor Formica, a Neapolitan actor, who, in the character of Coviello, a charlatan, displayed so much genuine wit, such bitter satire, and exquisite humour, rendered doubly effective by a Neapolitan accent and national gesticulations, that other representations were abandoned; and gipsies told fortunes, and Jews hung in vain. The whole population of Rome gradually assembled round the novel, the inimitable Formica. The people relished his flashes of splenetic humour aimed at the great; the higher orders were delighted with an *improvisatore*,

who, in the intervals of his dialogues, sung to the lute, of which he was a perfect master, the Neapolitan ballads, then so much in vogue. The attempts made by his fellow-revellers to obtain some share of the plaudits he so abundantly received, whether he spoke or sung, asked or answered questions, were all abortive; while he, (says Baldinucci), "at the head of every thing by his wit, eloquence, and brilliant humour, drew half Rome to himself." The contrast between his beautiful musical and poetical compositions, and those Neapolitan gesticulations in which he indulged, when, laying aside his lute, he presented his vials and salves to the delighted audience, exhibited a versatility of genius, which it was difficult to attribute to any individual then known in Rome. Guesses and suppositions were still vainly circulating among all classes, when, on the close of the Carnival, Formica, ere he drove his triumphal car from the Piazza Navona, which, with one of the streets in the Trasevere, had been the principal scene of his triumph, ordered his troop to raise their masks, and, removing his own, discovered that Coviello was the sublime author of the Prometheus, and his little troop the "Partigiani" of Salvator Rosa. All Rome was from this moment (to use a phrase which all his biographers have adopted) "*filled with his fame.*" That notoriety which his high genius had failed to procure for him, was obtained at once by those lighter talents which he had nearly suffered to fall into neglect, while more elevated views had filled his mind.' p. 253.

Lady Morgan then gives a very learned and sprightly account of the characters of the old Italian comedy, with a notice of Moliere, and sprinklings of general reading, from which we have not room for an extract. Salvator, after this event, became the rage in Rome; his society and conversation were much sought after, and his *improvisatore* recitations of his own poetry, in which he sketched the outline of his future Satires, were attended by some of the greatest wits and most eminent scholars of the age. He on one occasion gave a burlesque comedy in ridicule of Bernini, the favourite court-artist. This attack drew on him a resentment, the consequences of which, 'like a wounded snake, dragged their slow length' through the rest of his life. Those who are the loudest and bitterest in their complaints of persecution and ill-usage are the first to provoke it. In the warfare waged so fondly and (as it is at last discovered) so unequally with the world, the assailants and the sufferers will be generally found to be the same persons. We would not, by this indirect censure of Salvator, be understood to condemn or discourage those who have an inclination to go on the same *forlorn hope*: we merely wish to warn them of the nature of the service, and that they

ought not to prepare for a triumph, but a martyrdom! If they are ambitious of that, let them take their course.

Salvator's success in his new attempt threw him in some measure, from this time forward, into the career of comedy and letters: painting, however, still remained his principal pursuit and strongest passion. His various talents and agreeable accomplishments procured him many friends and admirers, though his hasty temper and violent pretensions often defeated their good intentions towards him. He wanted to force his Histories down the throats of the public and of private individuals, who came to purchase his pictures, and turned from, and even insulted those who praised his landscapes. This jealousy of a man's self, and quarrelling with the favourable opinion of the world, because it does not exactly accord with our own view of our merits, is one of the most tormenting and incurable of all follies. We subjoin the two following remarkable instances of it.

'The Prince Francesco Ximenes having arrived in Rome, found time, in the midst of the honours paid to him, to visit Salvator Rosa; and, being received by the artist in his gallery, he told him frankly, that he had come for the purpose of seeing and purchasing some of those beautiful small landscapes, whose manner and subjects had delighted him in many foreign galleries.—"Be it known then to your Excellency," interrupted Rosa impetuously, "that *I know nothing of landscape-painting!* Something indeed I do know of painting *figures* and *historical subjects*, which I strive to exhibit to such eminent judges as yourself, in order that once for all I may banish from the public mind that fantastic humour of supposing I am a landscape, and not an historical painter.'

'Shortly after, a very rich cardinal, whose name is not recorded, called on Salvator to purchase some pictures; and as his Eminence walked up and down the gallery, he always paused before some certain *quadretti*, and never before the historical subjects, while Salvator muttered from time to time between his clenched teeth, "*Sempre, sempre, pæsi piccoli.*" When at last the Cardinal glanced his eye over some great historical picture, and carelessly asked the price as a sort of company question, Salvator bellowed forth "*Un milione.*" His Eminence, stunned or offended, hurried away, and returned no more.'

Other stories are told of the like import. And yet if Salvator had been more satisfied in his own mind of the superiority of his historical pictures, he would have been less anxious to make others converts to his opinion. So shrewd a man ought to have been aware of the force of the proverb about *nursing the ricketty child.*

One of the most creditable *traits* in the character of Salvator is the

friendship of Carlo Rossi, a wealthy Roman citizen, who raised his prices and built a chapel to his memory; and one of the most pleasant and flattering to his talents is the rivalry of Messer Agli, an old Bolognese merchant, who came all the way to Florence (while Salvator was residing there) to enter the lists with him as the clown and quack-doctor of the *commedia della arte*.

We loiter on the way with Lady Morgan—which is a sign that we do not dislike her company, and that our occasional severity is less real than affected. She opens many pleasant vistas, and calls up numerous themes of never-failing interest. Would that we could wander with her under the azure skies and golden sunsets of Claude Lorraine, amidst classic groves and temples, and flocks, and herds, and winding streams, and distant hills and glittering sunny vales,

> ——'Where universal Pan,
> Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
> Leads on the eternal spring;'—

or repose in Gaspar Poussin's cool grottos, or on his breezy summits, or by his sparkling waterfals!—but we must not indulge too long in these delightful dreams. Time presses, and we must on. It is mentioned in this part of the narrative which treats of Salvator's contemporaries and great rivals in landscape, that Claude Lorraine, besides his natural stupidity in all other things, was six-and-thirty before he began to paint (almost the age at which Raphael died), and in ten years after was—what no other human being ever was or will be. The lateness of the period at which he commenced his studies, render those unrivalled masterpieces which he has left behind him to all posterity a greater miracle than they would otherwise be. One would think that perfection required at least a whole life to attain it. Lady Morgan has described this divine artist very prettily and poetically; but her description of Gaspar Poussin is as fine, and might in some places be mistaken for that of his rival. This is not as it should be; since the distance is immeasurable between the productions of Claude Lorraine and all other landscapes whatever—with the single exception of Titian's backgrounds.[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds used to say (such was his opinion of the faultless beauty of his style), that 'there would be another Raphael before there was another Claude!'

The first volume of the present work closes with a spirited account of the short-lived revolution at Naples, brought about by the celebrated

[1] We might refer to the back-ground of the St. Peter Martyr. Claude, Gaspar, and Salvator could not have painted this one back-ground among them! but we have already remarked, that *comparisons are odious*.

...0 RIDGE ROAD
...LEY, CALIFORNIA

Massaniello. Salvator contrived to be present at one of the meetings of the patriotic conspirators by torchlight, and has left a fine sketch of the unfortunate leader. An account of this memorable transaction will be found in Robertson, and a still more striking and genuine one in the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz.

We must hasten through the second volume with more rapid strides. Salvator, after the failure and death of Massaniello, returned to Rome, disappointed, disheartened, and gave vent to his feelings on this occasion by his two poems, *La Babilonia*, and *La Guerra*, which are full of the spirit of love and hatred, of enthusiasm and bitterness.[1] About the same time, he painted his two allegorical pictures of 'Human Frailty,' and 'Fortune.' These were exhibited in the Pantheon; and from the sensation they excited, and the sinister comments that were made on them, had nearly conducted Salvator to the Inquisition. In the picture of 'Fortune,' more particularly, 'the nose of one powerful ecclesiastic, and the eye of another, were detected in the brutish physiognomy of the swine who were treading pearls and flowers under their feet; a Cardinal was recognised in an ass scattering with his hoof the laurel and myrtle which lay in his path, and in an old goat reposing on roses. Some there were who even fancied the infallible lover of Donna Olympia, the Sultana Queen of the Quirinal! The cry of atheism and sedition—of contempt of established authorities — was thus raised under the influence of private pique and long-cherished envy. It soon found an echo in the painted walls where the Conclave sat "in close divan," and it was bandied about from mouth to mouth till it reached the ears of the Inquisitor, within the dark recesses of his house of terrors.' II. 20.

The consequence was, that our artist was obliged to fly from Rome, after waiting a little to see if the storm would blow over, and to seek an asylum in the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany at Florence. Here he passed some of the happiest years of his life, flattered by princes, feasting nobles, conversing with poets, receiving the suggestions of critics, painting landscapes or history as he liked best, composing and reciting his own verses, and making a fortune, which he flung away again as soon as he had made it, with the characteristic improvidence of genius. Of the gay, careless, and friendly intercourse in which he passed his time, the following passages give a very lively intimation.

[1] The Cardinal Sforza Pallavicini, having been present by his own request at the recitation of one of these pieces, and being asked his opinion, declared, that 'Salvator's poetry was full of splendid passages, but that, as a whole, it was unequal.'

'It happened that Rosa, in one of those fits of idleness to which even his strenuous spirit was occasionally liable, flung down his pencil, and sallied forth to communicate the infection of his *far niente* to his friend Lippi. On entering his *studio*, however, he found him labouring with great impetuosity on the back-ground of his picture of the *Flight into Egypt*; but in such sullen vehemence, or in such evident ill-humour, that Salvator demanded, "Che fai, amico?"—"What am I about?" said Lippi; "I am going mad with vexation. Here is one of my best pictures ruined: I am under a spell, and cannot even draw the branch of a tree, nor a tuft of herbage."—"Signore Dio!" exclaimed Rosa, twisting the paletti off his friend's thumb, "what colours are here?" and scraping them off, and gently pushing away Lippi, he took his place, murmuring, "Let me see! who knows but I may help you out of the scrape?" Half in jest and half in earnest, he began to touch and retouch, and change, till nightfall found him at the easel, finishing one of the best back-ground landscapes he ever painted. All Florence came the next day to look at his *chef-d'œuvre*, and the first artists of the age took it as a study.

'A few days afterwards, Salvator called upon Lippi, found him preparing a canvas, while Malatesta read aloud to him and Ludovico Seranai the astronomer, the MS. of his poem of the Sphynx. Salvator, with a noiseless step, took his seat in an old Gothic window, and, placing himself in a listening attitude, with a bright light falling through stained glass upon his fine head, produced a splendid study, of which Lippi, without a word of his intention, availed himself; and executed, with incredible rapidity, the finest picture of Salvator that was ever painted. Several copies of it were taken with Lippi's permission, and Ludovico Seranai purchased the original at a considerable price. In this picture Salvator is dressed in a cloth habit, with richly slashed sleeves, turnovers, and a collar. It is only a head and bust, and the eyes are looking towards the spectator.' II. 66.

At one time, his impatience at being separated from Carlo Rossi and other friends was so great, that he narrowly risked his safety to obtain an interview with them. About three years after he had been at Florence, he took post-horses, and set off for Rome at midnight. Having arrived at an inn in the suburbs, he despatched messages to eighteen of his friends, who all came, thinking he had got into some new scrape; breakfasted with them, and returned to Florence, before his Roman persecutors or his Tuscan friends were aware of his adventure.

Salvator, however, was discontented even with this splendid lot,

and sought to embower himself in entire seclusion, and in deeper bliss, in the palace of the Counts Maffei at Volterra, and in the solitudes in its neighbourhood. Here he wandered night and morn, drinking in that slow poison of reflection which his soul loved best—planning his *Catiline Conspiracy*—preparing his Satires for the press—and weeding out their Neapolitanisms, in which he was assisted by the fine taste and quick tact of his friend Redi. This appears to have been the only part of his life to which he looked back with pleasure or regret. He however left this enviable retreat soon after, to return to Rome, partly for family reasons, and partly, no doubt, because the deepest love of solitude and privacy does not wean the mind, that has once felt the feverish appetite, from the desire of popularity and distinction. Here, then, he planted himself on the Monte Pincio, in a house situated between those of Claude Lorraine and Nicholas Poussin—and used to walk out of an evening on the fine promenade near it, at the head of a group of gay cavaliers, musicians, and aspiring artists; while Nicholas Poussin, the very genius of antiquity personified, and now bent down with age himself, led another band of reverential disciples, side by side, with some learned virtuoso or pious churchman! Meantime, commissions poured in upon Salvator, and he painted successively his *Jonas* for the King of Denmark—his *Battle-piece* for Louis XIV., still in the Museum at Paris—and, lastly, to his infinite delight, an Altar-piece for one of the churches in Rome. Salvator, about this time, seems to have imbibed (even before he was lectured on his want of economy by the *Fool* at the house of his friend Minucci) some idea of making the best use of his time and talents.

'The Constable Colonna (it is reported) sent a purse of gold to Salvator Rosa on receiving one of his beautiful landscapes. The painter, not to be outdone in generosity, sent the prince another picture, as a present,—which the prince insisted on renumerating with another purse; another present and another purse followed; and this struggle between generosity and liberality continued, to the tune of many other pictures and presents, until the prince, finding himself a loser by the contest, sent Salvator two purses, with an assurance that he gave in, *et lui céda le champ de bataille*.'

Salvator was tenacious in demanding the highest prices for his pictures, and brooking no question as to any abatement; but when he had promised his friend Ricciardi a picture, he proposed to restrict himself to a subject of one or two figures; and they had nearly a quarrel about it.

'In April 1662,' says his biographer, 'and not long after his return to Rome, his love of wild and mountainous scenery, and

perhaps his wandering tendencies, revived by his recent journey, induced him to visit Loretto, or at least to make that holy city the *shrine* of a pilgrimage, which it appears was one rather of taste than of devotion. His feelings on this journey are well described in one of his own *Letters* inserted in the Appendix. "I could not," says Salvator, "give you any account of my return from Loretto, till I arrived here on the sixth of May. I was for fifteen days in perpetual motion. The journey was beyond all description curious and picturesque: much more so than the route from hence to Florence. There is a strange mixture of savage wildness and domestic scenery, of plain and precipice, such as the eye delights to wander over. I can safely swear to you, that the tints of these mountains by far exceed all I have ever observed under your Tuscan skies; and as for your Verucola, which I once thought a dreary desert, I shall henceforth deem it a fair garden, in comparison with the scenes I have now explored in these Alpine solitudes. O God! how often have I sighed to possess, how often since called to mind, those solitary hermitages which I passed on my way! How often wished that fortune had reserved for me such a destiny! I went by Ancona and Torolo, and on my return visited Assisa—all sites of extraordinary interest to the genius of painting. I saw at Terni (four miles out of the high road) the famous waterfal of Velino; an object to satisfy the boldest imagination by its terrific beauty—a river dashing down a mountainous precipice of near a mile in height, and then flinging up its foam to nearly an equal altitude! Believe, that while in this spot, I moved not, saw not, without bearing you full in my mind and memory.' See p. 277.

He begins another letter, of a later date, on his being employed to paint the altar of San Giovanni de Fiorentini, thus gaily:—

'*Sonate le campane*—Ring out the chimes!—At last after thirty years existence in Rome, of hopes blasted and complaints reiterated against men and gods, the occasion is accorded me for giving one altar-piece to the public.'

His anxiety to finish this picture in time for a certain festival, kept him, he adds, 'secluded from all commerce of the pen, and from every other in the world; and I can truly say, that I have forgotten myself, even to neglecting to eat; and so arduous is my application, that when I had nearly finished, I was obliged to keep my bed for two days; and had not my recovery been assisted by emetics, certain it is it would have been all over with me in consequence of some obstruction in the stomach. Pity me then, dear friend, if for the glory of my pencil, I have neglected to devote my pen to the service of friendship.'—*Letter to the Abate Ricciardi.*

Passeri has left the following particulars recorded of him on the day when this picture (*the Martyrdom of Saint Damian and Saint Cosmus*) was first exhibited.

'He (Salvator) had at last exposed his picture in the San Giovanni de' Fiorentini; and I, to recreate myself, ascended on that evening to the heights of *Monte della Trinita*, where I found Salvator walking arm in arm with Signor Giovanni Carlo dei Rossi, so celebrated for his performance on the harp of three strings, and brother to that Luigi Rossi, who is so eminent all over the world for his perfection in musical composition. And when Salvator (who was my intimate friend) perceived me, he came forward laughingly, and said to me these precise words:—"Well, what say the malignants now? Are they at last convinced that I *can* paint on the great scale? Why, if not, then e'en let Michael Angelo come down, and do something better. Now at least I have stopped their mouths, and shown the world what I am worth." I shrugged my shoulders. I and the Signor Rossi changed the subject to one which lasted us till night-fall; and from this (continues Passeri in his rambling way [1]) it may be gathered how *gagliardo* he (Salvator) was in his own opinion. Yet it may not be denied but that he had all the endowments of a marvellous great painter! one of great resources and high perfection; and had he no other merit, he had at least that of being the originator of his own style. He spoke, this evening, of Paul Veronese more than of any other painter, and praised the Venetian school greatly. *To Raphael he had no great leaning*, for it was the fashion of the Neapolitan School to call him hard, *di pietra*, dry,' &c. p. 172.

Our artist's constitution now began to break, worn out perhaps by the efforts of his art, and still more by the irritation of his mind. In a letter dated in 1666, he complains,

'I have suffered two months of agony, even with the abstemious regimen of chicken broth! My feet are two lumps of ice, in spite of the woollen hose I have imported from Venice. I never permit the fire to be quenched in my own room, and am more solicitous than even the Cavalier Cigoli,' (who died of a cold caught in painting a fresco in the Vatican). 'There is not a fissure in the house that I am not daily employed in diligently stopping up, and yet with all this I cannot get warm; nor do I think the torch of love, or the caresses of Phryne herself, would kindle me into a glow. For the rest, I can talk of any thing but my pencil: my canvass lies turned to the wall; my colours are dried up now, and for ever; nor can I give my thoughts to any subject whatever, but chimney-corners,

[1] Lady Morgan is always quarrelling with Passeri's style, because it is not that of a modern Blue-stocking.

brasiers, warming-pans, woollen gloves, woollen caps, and such sort of gear. In short, dear friend, I am perfectly aware that I have lost much of my original ardour, and am absolutely reduced to pass entire days without speaking a word. Those fires, once mine and so brilliant, are now all spent, or evaporating in smoke. Woe unto me, should I ever be reduced to exercise my pencil for bread!'

Yet after this, he at intervals produced some of his best pictures. The scene, however, was now hastening to a close; and the account here given of his last days, though containing nothing perhaps very memorable, will yet, we think, be perused with a melancholy interest.

'A change in his complexion was thought to indicate some derangement of the liver, and he continued in a state of great languor and depression during the autumn of 1672; but in the winter of 1673, the total loss of appetite, and of all power of digestion, reduced him almost to the last extremity; and he consented, at the earnest request of Lucrezia and his numerous friends, to take more medical advice. He now passed through the hands of various physicians, whose ignorance and technical pedantry come out with characteristic effect in the simple and matter-of-fact details which the good Padre Baldovini has left of the last days of his eminent friend. Various cures were suggested by the Roman faculty for a disease which none had yet ventured to name. Meantime the malady increased, and showed itself in all the life-wearing symptoms of sleeplessness, loss of appetite, intermitting fever, and burning thirst. A French quack was called in to the sufferer; and his prescription was, that he should drink water abundantly, and nothing but water. While, however, under the care of this Gallic Sangrado, a confirmed dropsy unequivocally declared itself; and Salvator, now acquainted with the nature of his disease, once more submitted to the entreaties of his friends; and, at the special persuasion of the Padre Francesco Baldovini, placed himself under the care of a celebrated Italian empiric, then in great repute in Rome, called Dr. Penna.

'Salvator had but little confidence in medicine. He had already, during this melancholy winter, discarded all his physicians, and literally *thrown physic to the dogs*. But hope, and spring, and love of life, revived together; and, towards the latter end of February he consented to receive the visits of Penna, who had cured Baldovini (on the good father's own word) of a confirmed dropsy the year before. When the doctor was introduced, Salvator, with his wonted manliness, called on him to answer the question he was about to propose with honesty and frankness, viz. *Was his disorder curable?* Penna, after going through certain professional forms, answered,

"that his disorder was a simple, and not a complicated dropsy, and that therefore it was curable."

'Salvator instantly and cheerfully placed himself in the doctor's hands, and consented to submit to whatever he should subscribe. "The remedy of Penna," says Baldovini, "lay in seven little vials, of which the contents were to be swallowed every day." But it was obvious to all, that as the seven vials were emptied, the disorder of Rosa increased; and on the seventh day of his attendance, the doctor declared to his friend Baldovini, that the malady of his patient was beyond his reach and skill.

'The friends of Salvator now suggested to him their belief that his disease was brought on and kept up by his rigid confinement to the house, so opposed to his former active habits of life; but when they urged him to take air and exercise, he replied significantly to their importunities, "I take exercise! I go out! if this is your counsel, how are you deceived!" At the earnest request, however, of Penna, he consented to see him once more; but the moment he entered his room he demanded of him, "if he *now* thought that he was curable?" Penna, in some emotion, prefaced his verdict by declaring solemnly, "that he should conceive it no less glory to restore so illustrious a genius to health, and to the society he was so calculated to adorn, than to save the life of the Sovereign Pontiff himself; but that, as far as his science went, the case was now beyond the reach of human remedy." While Penna spoke, Salvator, who was surrounded by his family and many friends, fixed his penetrating eyes on the physician's face, with the intense look of one who sought to read his sentence in the countenance of his judge ere it was verbally pronounced;—but that sentence was now passed! and Salvator, who seemed more struck by surprise than by apprehension, remained silent and in a fixed attitude! His friends, shocked and grieved, or awed by the expression of his countenance, which was marked by a stern and hopeless melancholy, arose and departed silently one by one. After a long and deep reverie, Rosa suddenly left the room, and shut himself up alone in his study. There in silence, and in unbroken solitude, he remained for two days, holding no communication with his wife, his son or his most intimate friends; and when at last their tears and lamentations drew him forth, he was no longer recognisable. Shrunk, feeble, attenuated, almost speechless, he sunk on his couch, to rise no more!

'Life was now wearing away with such obvious rapidity, that his friends, both clerical and laical, urged him in the most strenuous manner to submit to the ceremonies and forms prescribed by the Roman Catholic church in such awful moments. How much the solemn sadness of those moments may be increased, even to terror

and despair, by such pompous and lugubrious pageants all who have visited Italy—all who still visit it, can testify. Salvator demanded what they required of him. They replied, "in the first instance to receive the sacrament as it is administered in Rome to the dying."—"To receiving the sacrament," says his confesser Baldovini, "he showed no repugnance (*non se mostrò repugnante*); but he vehemently and positively refused to allow the host, with all the solemn pomp of its procession, to be brought to his house, which he deemed unworthy of the divine presence.

'The rejection of a ceremony which was deemed in Rome indispensably necessary to salvation, and by one who was already stamped with the church's reprobation, soon took air; report exaggerated the circumstance into a positive expression of infidelity; and the gossipry of the Roman Anterooms was supplied for the time with a subject of discussion, in perfect harmony with their slander, bigotry, and idleness. "As I went forth from Salvator's door," relates the worthy Baldovini, "I met the *Canonico Scornio*, a man who has taken out a license to speak of all men as he pleases. 'And how goes it with Salvator?' demands of me this Canonico. 'Bad enough, I fear.'—'Well, a few nights back, happening to be in the anteroom of a certain great prelate, I found myself in the centre of a circle of disputants, who were busily discussing whether the aforesaid Salvator would die a schismatic, a Huguenot, a Calvinist, or a Lutheran?'—'He will die, Signor Canonico,' I replied, 'when it pleases God, a better Catholic than any of those who now speak so slightingly of him!'—and so I pursued my way.''

'On the 15th of March Baldovini entered the patient's chamber. But, to all appearance, Salvator was suffering great agony. "How goes it with thee, Rosa?" asked Baldovini kindly, as he approached him. "Bad, bad!" was the emphatic reply. While writhing with pain, the sufferer after a moment added:—"To judge by what I now endure, the hand of death grasps me sharply."

'In the restlessness of pain, he now threw himself on the edge of the bed, and placed his head on the bosom of Lucrezia, who sat supporting and weeping over him. His afflicted son and friend took their station at the other side of his couch, and stood watching the issue of these sudden and frightful spasms in mournful silence. At that moment a celebrated Roman physician, the Doctor Catanni, entered the apartment. He felt the pulse of Salvator, and perceived that he was fast sinking. He communicated his approaching dissolution to those most interested in the melancholy intelligence, and it struck all present with unutterable grief. Baldovini, however, true to his sacred calling, even in the depth of his human affliction, instantly despatched the young

Agosto to the neighbouring Convent *della Trinità*, for the holy Viaticum. While life was still fluttering at the heart of Salvator, the officiating priest of the day arrived, bearing with him the holy apparatus of the last mysterious ceremony of the church. The shoulders of Salvator were laid bare, and anointed with the consecrated oil: some prayed fervently, others wept, and all even still hoped; but the taper which the Doctor Catanni held to the lips of Salvator, while the Viaticum was administered, burned brightly and steadily! Life's last sigh had transpired, as Religion performed her last rite.' p. 205.

Salvator left a wife and son, (a boy of about thirteen), who inherited a considerable property, in books, prints, and bills of exchange, which his father had left in his banker's hands for pictures painted in the last few years of his life.

We confess we close these volumes with something of a melancholy feeling. We have, in this great artist, another instance added to the list of those who, being born to give delight to others, appear to have lived only to torment themselves, and, with all the ingredients of happiness placed within their reach, to have derived no benefit either from talents or success. Is it, that the outset of such persons in life (who are raised by their own efforts from want and obscurity) jars their feelings and sours their tempers? Or that painters, being often men without education or general knowledge, over-rate their own pretensions, and meet with continual mortifications in the rebuffs they receive from the world, who do not judge by the same individual standard? Or is a morbid irritability the inseparable concomitant of genius? None of these suppositions fairly solves the difficulty; for many of the old painters (and those the greatest) were men of mild manners, of great modesty, and good temper. Painting, however, speaks a language known to few, and of which all pretend to judge; and may thus, perhaps, afford more occasion to pamper sensibility into a disease, where the seeds of it are sown too deeply in the constitution, and not checked by proportionable self-knowledge and reflection. Where an artist of genius, however, is not made the victim of his own impatience, or of idle censures, or of the good fortune of others, we cannot conceive of a more delightful or enviable life. There is none that implies a greater degree of thoughtful abstraction, or a more entire freedom from angry differences of opinion, or that leads the mind more out of itself, and reposes more calmly on the grand and beautiful, or the most casual object in nature. Salvator died young. He had done enough for fame; and had he been happier, he would perhaps have lived longer. We do not, in one sense, feel the loss of painters so much as that of other eminent men. They may still be said

to be present with us bodily in their works: we can revive their memory by every object we see; and it seems as if they could never wholly die, while the ideas and thoughts that occupied their minds while living survive, and have a palpable and permanent existence in the forms of external nature.

AMERICAN LITERATURE—DR. CHANNING

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Of the later American writers, who, besides Dr. Channing, have acquired some reputation in England, we can only recollect Mr. Washington Irving, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Cooper. To the first of these we formerly paid an ample tribute of respect; nor do we wish to retract a tittle of what we said on that occasion, or of the praise due to him for brilliancy, ease, and a faultless equability of style. Throughout his polished pages, no thought shocks by its extravagance, no word offends by vulgarity or affectation. All is gay, but guarded, —heedless, but sensitive of the smallest blemish. We cannot deny it—nor can we conceal it from ourselves or the world, if we would—that he is, at the same time, deficient in nerve and originality. Almost all his sketches are like patterns taken in silk paper from our classic writers;—the traditional manners of the last age are still kept up (stuffed in glass cases) in Mr. Irving's modern version of them. The only variation is in the transposition of dates; and herein the author is chargeable with a fond and amiable anachronism. He takes Old England for granted as he finds it described in our stock-books of a century ago—gives us a Sir Roger de Coverley in the year 1819, instead of the year 1709; and supposes old English hospitality and manners, relegated from the metropolis, to have taken refuge somewhere in Yorkshire, or the fens of Lincolnshire. In some sequestered spot or green savannah, we can conceive Mr. Irving enchanted with the style of the wits of Queen Anne;—in the bare, broad, straight, mathematical streets of his native city, his busy fancy wandered through the blind alleys and huddled zig-zag sinuosities of London, and the signs of Lothbury and East-Cheap swung and creaked in his delighted ears. The air of his own country was too poor and thin to satisfy the pantings of youthful ambition; he gasped for British popularity,—he came, and found it. He was received, caressed, applauded, made giddy: the national politeness owed him some return, for he imitated, admired, deferred to us; and, if his notions were sometimes wrong, yet it was plain he thought of nothing else, and was ready to sacrifice every thing to obtain a smile or a look

of approbation. It is true, he brought no new earth, no sprig of laurel gathered in the wilderness, no red bird's wing, no gleam from crystal lake or new-discovered fountain, (neither grace nor grandeur plucked from the bosom of this Eden-state like that which belongs to cradled infancy); but he brought us *rifaciméntos* of our own thoughts—copies of our favourite authors: we saw our self admiration reflected in an accomplished stranger's eyes; and the lover received from his mistress, the British public, her most envied favours.

Mr. Brown, who preceded him, and was the author of several novels which made some noise in this country, was a writer of a different stamp. Instead of hesitating before a scruple, and aspiring to avoid a fault, he braved criticism, and aimed only at effect. He was an inventor, but without materials. His strength and his efforts are convulsive throes—his works are a banquet of horrors. The hint of some of them is taken from Caleb Williams and St. Leon, but infinitely exaggerated, and carried to disgust and outrage. They are full (to disease) of imagination,—but it is forced, violent, and shocking. This is to be expected, we apprehend, in attempts of this kind in a country like America, where there is, generally speaking, no *natural imagination*. The mind must be excited by overstraining, by pulleys and levers. Mr. Brown was a man of genius, of strong passion, and active fancy; but his genius was not seconded by early habit, or by surrounding sympathy. His story and his interests are not wrought out, therefore, in the ordinary course of nature; but are, like the monster in Frankenstein, a man made by art and determined will. For instance, it may be said of him, as of Gawin Douglas, 'Of Brownies and Bogilis full is his Buik.' But no ghost, we will venture to say, was ever seen in North America. They do not walk in broad day; and the night of ignorance and superstition which favours their appearance, was long past before the United States lifted up their head beyond the Atlantic wave. The inspired poet's tongue must have an echo in the state of public feeling, or of involuntary belief, or it soon grows harsh or mute. In America, they are 'so well policied,' so exempt from the knowledge of fraud or force, so free from the assaults of *the flesh and the devil*, that in pure hardness of belief they hoot the *Beggar's Opera* from the stage: with them, poverty and crime, pickpockets and highwaymen, the lock-up-house and the gallows, are things incredible to sense! In this orderly and undramatic state of security and freedom from natural foes, Mr. Brown has provided one of his heroes with a demon to torment him, and fixed him at his back;—but what is to keep him there? Not any prejudice or lurking superstition on the part of the American reader: for the lack of such, the writer is

obliged to make up by incessant rodomontade, and face-making. The want of genuine imagination is always proved by caricature: monsters are the growth, not of passion, but of the attempt forcibly to stimulate it. In our own unrivalled Novelist, and the great exemplar of this kind of writing, we see how ease and strength are united. Tradition and invention meet half way; and nature scarce knows how to distinguish them. The reason is, there is here an old and solid ground in previous manners and opinion for imagination to rest upon. The air of this bleak northern clime is filled with legendary lore: Not a castle without the stain of blood upon its floor or winding steps: not a glen without its ambush or its feat of arms: not a lake without its Lady! But the map of America is not historical; and, therefore, works of fiction do not take root in it; for the fiction, to be good for any thing, must not be in the author's mind, but belong to the age or country in which he lives. The genius of America is essentially mechanical and modern.

Mr. Cooper describes things to the life, but he puts no motion into them. While he is insisting on the minutest details, and explaining all the accompaniments of an incident, the story stands still. The elaborate accumulation of particulars serves not to embody his imagery, but to distract and impede the mind. He is not so much the master of his materials as their drudge: He labours under an epilepsy of the fancy. He thinks himself bound in his character of novelist to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Thus, if two men are struggling on the edge of a precipice for life or death, he goes not merely into the vicissitudes of action or passion as the chances of the combat vary; but stops to take an inventory of the geography of the place, the shape of the rock, the precise attitude and display of the limbs and muscles, with the eye and habits of a sculptor. Mr. Cooper does not seem to be aware of the infinite divisibility of mind and matter; and that an 'abridgment' is all that is possible or desirable in the most individual representation. A person who is so determined, may write volumes on a grain of sand or an insect's wing. Why describe the dress and appearance of an Indian chief, down to his tobacco-stopper and button-holes? It is mistaking the province of the artist for that of the historian; and it is this very obligation of painting and statuary to fill up all the details, that renders them incapable of telling a story, or of expressing more than a single moment, group, or figure. Poetry or romance does not descend into the particulars, but atones for it by a more rapid march and an intuitive glance at the more striking results. By considering truth or matter-of-fact as the sole element of popular fiction, our author fails in massing and in impulse. In the midst

of great vividness and fidelity of description, both of nature and manners, there is a sense of jejuneness,—for half of what is described is insignificant and indifferent; there is a hard outline,—a little manner; and his most striking situations do not tell as they might and ought, from his seeming more anxious about the mode and circumstances than the catastrophe. In short, he anatomizes his subjects; and his characters bear the same relation to living beings that the botanic specimens collected in a portfolio do to the living plant or tree. The sap does not circulate kindly; nor does the breath of heaven visit, or its dews moisten them. Or, if Mr. Cooper gets hold of an appalling circumstance, he, from the same tenacity and thraldom to outward impressions, never lets it go: He repeats it without end. Thus, if he once hits upon the supposition of a wild Indian's eyes glaring through a thicket, every bush is from that time forward furnished with a pair; the page is studded with them, and you can no longer look about you at ease or in safety. The high finishing we have spoken of is particularly at variance with the rudeness of the materials. In Richardson it was excusable, where all was studied and artificial; but a few dashes of red ochre are sufficient to paint the body of a savage chieftain; nor should his sudden and frantic stride on his prey be treated with the precision and punctiliousness of a piece of *still life*. There are other American writers, (such as the historiographer of *Brother Jonathan*,) who carry this love of veracity to a pitch of the marvellous. They run riot in an account of the dishes at a boarding-house, as if it were a banquet of the Gods; and recount the overturning of a travelling stage-waggon with as much impetuosity, turbulence, and exaggerated enthusiasm, as if it were the fall of Phaeton. In the absence of subjects of real interest, men make themselves an interest out of nothing, and magnify mole-hills into mountains. This is not the fault of Mr. Cooper: He is always true, though sometimes tedious; and correct, at the expense of being insipid. His *Pilot* is the best of his works; and truth to say, we think it a master-piece in its kind. It has great unity of purpose and feeling. Every thing in it may be said

> ——'To suffer a *sea-change*
> Into something new and strange.'

His Pilot never appears but when the occasion is worthy of him; and when he appears, the result is sure. The description of his guiding the vessel through the narrow strait left for her escape, the sea-fight, and the incident of the white topsail of the English man-of-war appearing above the fog, where it is first mistaken for a cloud,

are of the first order of graphic composition; to say nothing of the admirable episode of Tom Coffin, and his long figure coiled up like a rope in the bottom of the boat. The rest is *common-place*; but then it is American common-place. We thank Mr. Cooper he does not take every thing from us, and therefore we can learn something from him. He has the saving grace of originality. We wish we could impress it, 'line upon line, and precept upon precept,' especially upon our American brethern, how precious, how invaluable *that* is. In art, in literature, in science, the least bit of nature is worth all the plagiarism in the world. The great secret of Sir Walter Scott's enviable, but unenvied success, lies in his transcribing from nature instead of transcribing from books.

Anterior to the writers above mentioned, were other three, who may be named as occupying (two of them at least) a higher and graver place in the yet scanty annals of American Literature. These were Franklin, the author (whoever he was) of the *American Farmer's Letters*, and Jonathan Edwards.

Franklin, the most celebrated, was emphatically an American. He was a great experimental philosopher, a consummate politician, and a paragon of common sense. His *Poor Robin* was an absolute manual for a country in leading-strings, making its first attempts to go alone. There is nowhere compressed in the same compass so great a fund of local information and political sagacity, as in his *Examination before the Privy Council* in the year 1754. The fine *Parable against Persecution*, which appears in his miscellaneous works, is borrowed from Bishop Taylor. Franklin is charged by some with a want of imagination, or with being a mere prosaic, practical man; but the instinct of the true and the useful in him, had more genius in it than all the 'metre-ballad-mongering' of those who take him to task.

The *American Farmer's Letters*, (published under a feigned name [1] a little before the breaking out of the American war,) give us a tolerable idea how American scenery and manners may be treated with a lively, poetic interest. The pictures are sometimes highly-coloured, but they are vivid and strikingly characteristic. He gives not only the objects, but the feelings, of a new country. He describes himself as placing his little boy in a chair screwed to the plough which he guides, (to inhale the scent of the fresh furrows,) while his wife sits knitting under a tree at one end of the field. He recounts a battle between two snakes with an Homeric gravity and exuberance of style. He paints the dazzling, almost invisible flutter of the humming-bird's wing: Mr. Moore's airiest verse is not

[1] Hector St. John.

more light and evanescent. His account of the manners of the Nantucket people, their frank simplicity, and festive rejoicings after the perils and hardships of the whale-fishing, is a true and heartfelt picture. There is no fastidious refinement or cynical contempt: He enters into their feelings and amusements with the same alacrity as they do themselves; and this is sure to awaken a fellow-feeling in the reader. If the author had been thinking of the effect of his description in a London drawing-room, or had insisted on the most disagreeable features in the mere littleness of national jealousy, he would have totally spoiled it. But health, joy, and innocence, are good things all over the world, and in all classes of society; and, to impart pleasure, need only be described in their genuine characters. The power to sympathize with nature, without thinking of ourselves or others, if it is not a definition of genius, comes very near to it. From this liberal unaffected style, the Americans are particularly cut off by habitual comparisons with us, or upstart claims of their own; —by the dread of being thought vulgar, which necessarily makes them so, or the determination to be fine, which must for ever prevent it. The most interesting part of the author's work is that where he describes the first indications of the breaking-out of the American war—the distant murmur of the tempest—the threatened inroad of the Indians like an inundation on the peaceful back-settlements: his complaints and his auguries are fearful. But we have said enough of this *Illustrious Obscure*; for it is the rule of criticism to praise none but the over-praised, and to offer fresh incense to the idol of the day.

It is coming more within canonical bounds, and approaching nearer the main subject of this notice, to pay a tribute to the worth and talents of Jonathan Edwards; the well-known author of the *Treatise on the Will*, who was a Massachusetts divine and most able logician. Having produced *him*, the Americans need not despair of their metaphysicians. We do not scruple to say, that he is one of the acutest, most powerful, and, of all reasoners, the most conscientious and sincere. His closeness and candour are alike admirable. Instead of puzzling or imposing on others, he tries to satisfy his own mind. We do not say whether he is right or wrong; we only say that his method is 'an honest method:' there is not a trick, a subterfuge, a verbal sophism in his whole book. Those who compare his arguments with what Priestley or Hobbes have written on the same question, will find the one petulant and the other dogmatical. Far from taunting his adversaries, he endeavours with all his might to explain difficulties; and acknowledges that the words *Necessity*, *Irresistible*, *Inevitable*, &c., which are applied to external force, acting in spite

of the will, are misnomers when applied to acts, or a necessity emanating from the will itself; and that the repugnance of his favourite doctrine to common sense and feeling, (in which most of his party exult as a triumph of superior wisdom over vulgar prejudice,) is an unfortunate stumbling-block in the way of truth, arising out of the structure of language itself. His anxiety to clear up the scruples of others, is equal, in short, to his firmness in maintaining his own opinion.

We could wish that Dr. Channing had formed himself upon this manly and independent model, instead of going through the circle of reigning topics, to strike an affected balance between ancient prejudice and modern paradox; to trim to all opinions, and unite all suffrages; to calculate the vulgar clamour, or the venal sophistry of the British press, for the meridian of Boston. Dr. Channing is a great tactician in reasoning; and reasoning has nothing to do with tactics. We do not like to see a writer constantly trying to steal a march upon opinion without having his retreat cut off—full of pretensions, and void of offence. It is as bad as the opposite extreme of outraging decorum at every step; and is only a more covert mode of attracting attention, and gaining surreptitious applause. We never saw any thing more guarded in this respect than Dr. Channing's *Tracts* and *Sermons*—more completely suspended between heaven and earth. He keeps an eye on both worlds; kisses hands to the reading public all round; and does his best to stand well with different sects and parties. He is always in advance of the line, in an amiable and imposing attitude, but never far from succour. He is an Unitarian; but then he disclaims all connexion with Dr. Priestley, as a materialist; he denounces Calvinism and the Church of England; but to show that this proceeds from no want of liberality, makes the *amende honorable* to Popery and Popish divines;—is an American Republican and a French Bourbonist—abuses Bonaparte, and observes a profound silence with respect to Ferdinand—likes wit, provided it is serious—and is zealous for the propagation of the Gospel and the honour of religion; but thinks it should form a coalition with reason, and be surrounded with a halo of modern lights. We cannot combine such a system of checks and saving clauses. We are dissatisfied with the want not only of originality of view, but of moral daring. And here we will state a suspicion, into which we have been led by more than one American writer, that the establishment of civil and religious liberty is not quite so favourable to the independent formation, and free circulation of opinion, as might be expected. Where there is a perfect toleration—where there is neither Censorship of the press nor Inquisition, the public take upon themselves the task of *surveillance*,

and exercise the functions of a literary police, like so many familiars of the *Holy Office*. In a monarchy, or mixed government, there is an appeal open from the government to the people; there is a natural opposition, as it were, between prejudice, or authority, and reason: but when the community take the power into their own hands, and there is but one body of opinion, and one voice to express it, there can be no *reaction* against it; and to remonstrate or resist, is not only a public outrage, but sounds like a personal insult to every individual in the community. It is differing from the company; you become a *black sheep in the flock*. There is no excuse or mercy for it. Hence the too frequent cowardice, jesuitism, and sterility, produced by this republican discipline and drilling. Opinions must march abreast—must keep in rank and file, and woe to the caitiff thought that advances before the rest, or turns aside! This uniformity, and equal purpose on all sides, leads (if not checked) to a monstrous Ostracism in public opinion. Whoever outstrips, or takes a separate path to himself, is considered as usurping an unnatural superiority over the whole. He is treated not with respect or indulgence, but indignity.

We like Dr. Channing's Sermons best; his Criticisms less; his Politics least of all. We think several of his Discourses do great honour to himself and his profession, and are highly respectable models of pulpit-composition. We would instance more particularly, and recommend to the perusal of our readers, that *On the Duties of Children*. The feeling, the justness of observation, the tenderness, and the severity, are deserving of all praise. The author here appears in a truly amiable and advantageous light. This composition alone makes us believe, that he is a good, and might, with proper direction and self-reliance, have been even a great man. We shall give a long extract with the more pleasure, as we are assuredly actuated by no ill-will towards the reverend author, and only wish to point out how very considerable ability, and probable uprightness of intention, may be warped and injured by a wrong bias, and candidate-ship for false and contradictory honours.

'*First*, You are required to view and treat your parents with respect. Your tender, inexperienced age requires that you think of yourselves with humility, and conduct yourselves with modesty; that you respect the superior age, and wisdom, and improvements of your parents, and observe towards them a submissive deportment. Nothing is more unbecoming you; nothing will render you more unpleasant in the eyes of others, than froward or contemptuous conduct towards your parents. There are children, and I wish I could say there are only a few, who speak to their parents with rudeness, grow sullen at their rebukes, behave in their presence as if they deserved no

attention, hear them speak without noticing them, and rather ridicule than honour them. There are many children at the present day who think more highly of themselves than of their elders; who think that their own wishes are first to be gratified; who abuse the condescension and kindness of their parents, and treat them as servants rather than superiors. Beware, my young friends, lest you grow up with this assuming and selfish spirit. Regard your parents as kindly given you by God, to support, direct, and govern you in your present state of weakness and inexperience. Express your respect for them in your manner and conversation. Do not neglect those outward signs of dependence and inferiority which suit your age. You are young, and you should therefore take the lowest place, and rather retire than thrust yourselves forward into notice. You have much to learn, and you should therefore hear, instead of seeking to be heard. You are dependent, and you should therefore ask instead of demanding what you desire, and you should receive every thing from your parents as a favour, and not as a debt. I do not mean to urge upon you a slavish fear of your parents. Love them, and love them ardently; but mingle a sense of their superiority with your love. Feel a confidence in their kindness; but let not this confidence make you rude and presumptuous, and lead to indecent familiarity. Talk to them with openness and freedom; but never contradict with violence; never answer with passion or contempt.

'*Secondly*, You should be grateful to your parents. Consider how much you owe them. The time has been, and it was not a long time past, when you depended wholly on their kindness,—when you had no strength to make a single effort for yourselves,—when you could neither speak nor walk, and knew not the use of any of your powers. Had not a parent's arm supported you, you must have fallen to the earth, and perished. Observe with attention the infants which you often see, and consider that a little while ago you were as feeble as they are: you were only a burden and a care, and you had nothing with which you could repay your parents' affection. But did they forsake you? How many sleepless nights have they been disturbed by your cries! When you were sick, how tenderly did they hang over you! With what pleasure have they seen you grow up in health to your present state; and what do you now possess which you have not received from their hands? God, indeed, is your great parent, your best friend, and from him every good gift descends; but God is pleased to bestow every thing upon you through the kindness of your parents. To your parents you owe every comfort: you owe to them the shelter you enjoy from the rain and cold, the raiment which covers, and the food which nourishes you. While

you are seeking amusements, or are employed in gaining knowledge at school, your parents are toiling that you may be happy, that your wants may be supplied, that your minds may be improved, that you may grow up and be useful in the world. And when you consider how often you have forfeited all this kindness, and yet how ready they have been to forgive you, and to continue their favours, ought not you to look upon them with the tenderest gratitude? What greater monster can there be than an unthankful child, whose heart is never warmed by the daily expressions of parental solicitude; who, instead of requiting his best friend by his affectionate conduct, is sullen and passionate, and thinks his parents will do nothing for him, because they will not do all he desires? Consider how much better they can decide for you than you can for yourselves. You know but little of the world in which you live. You hastily catch at every thing which promises you pleasure; and unless the authority of a parent should restrain you, you would soon rush into ruin, without a thought or a fear. In pursuing your own inclinations, your health would be destroyed, your minds would run to waste, you would grow up slothful, selfish, a trouble to others, and burdensome to yourselves. Submit, then, cheerfully to your parents. Have you not experienced their goodness long enough to know, that they wish to make you happy, even when their commands are most severe? Prove, then, your sense of this goodness by doing cheerfully what they require. When they oppose your wishes, do not think that you have more knowledge than they. Do not receive their commands with a sour, angry, sullen look, which says, louder than words, that you obey only because you dare not rebel. If they deny your requests, do not persist in urging them, but consider how many requests they have already granted you. Do not expect that your parents are to give up every thing to you, but study to give up every thing to them. Do not wait for them to threaten, but when a look tells you what they want, fly to perform it. This is the way in which you can best reward them for all their pains and labours. In this way you will make their house pleasant and cheerful. But if you are disobedient, perverse, and stubborn, you will make home a place of contention, noise, and anger, and your best friends will have reason to wish that you had never been born. A disobedient child almost always grows up ill-natured and disobliging to all with whom he is connected. None love him, and he has no heart to love any but himself. If you would be amiable in your temper and manner, and desire to be beloved, let me advise you to begin your life with giving up your wills to your parents.

'Again, You must express your respect for your parents, by

placing unreserved confidence in them. This is a very important part of your duty. Children should learn to be honest, sincere, open-hearted to their parents. An artful, hypocritical child is one of the most unpromising characters in the world. You should have no secrets which you are unwilling to disclose to your parents. If you have done wrong, you should openly confess it, and ask that forgiveness which a parent's heart is so ready to bestow. If you wish to undertake any thing, ask their consent. Never begin any thing in the hope you can conceal your design. If you once strive to impose on your parents, you will be led on, from one step to another, to invent falsehoods, to practise artifice, till you will become contemptible and hateful. You will soon be detected, and then none will trust you. Sincerity in a child will make up for many faults. Of children, he is the worst who watches the eyes of his parents, pretends to obey as long as they see him, but as soon as they have turned away, does what they have forbidden. Whatever else you do, never deceive. Let your parents learn your faults from your own lips, and be assured they will never love you the less for your openness and sincerity.'—(*Sermons and Tracts*, p. 233.)

The whole discourse is prettily turned, and made out with great simplicity and feeling. There is a want neither of heart nor head. Dr. Channing here does well, for he trusts to his own observations and convictions. We may also give what he says in answer to Fenelon, on the subject of *self-annihilation*, as another favourable specimen of free enquiry, and of a higher or more philosophical cast.

'We have said that self-crucifixion and love to God are, in Fenelon's system, the two chief constituents, or elements, of virtue and perfection. To these we will give separate attention, although in truth, they often coalesce, and always imply one another. We begin with self-crucifixion, or what is often called self-sacrifice, and on this we chiefly differ from the expositions of our author. Perhaps the word *self* occurs more frequently than any other in Fenelon's writings, and he is particularly inclined to place it in contrast with, and in opposition to, God. According to his common teaching, God and self are hostile influences or attractions, having nothing in common; the one the concentration of all evil, the other of all good. Self is the principle and the seat of all guilt and misery. He is never weary of pouring reproach on self; and, generally speaking, sets no limits to the duty of putting it to a painful death. Now, language like this has led men to very injurious modes of regarding themselves and their own nature, and made them forgetful of what they owe to themselves. It has thrown a cloud over man's condition and prospects. It has led to self-contempt, a vice as pernicious as

pride. A man, when told perpetually to crucify *himself*, is apt to include under this word his whole nature; and we fear that, under this teaching, our nature is repressed, its growth stinted, its free movements chained, and, of course, its beauty, grace, and power impaired. We mean not to charge on Fenelon this error of which we have spoken, or to hold him responsible for its effects. But we do think that it finds shelter under his phraseology; and we deem it so great, so pernicious, as to need a faithful exposition. Men err in nothing more than in disparaging and wronging their own nature. None are just to themselves. The truth on this great subject is indeed so obscured, that it may startle as a paradox. A human being, justly viewed, instead of being bound to general self-crucifixion, cannot reverence and cherish himself too much. This position, we know, is strong; but strong language is needed to encounter strong delusion. We would teach that great limitations must be set to the duty of renouncing or denying ourselves, and that no self-crucifixion is virtuous but that which concurs with, and promotes self-respect. We will unfold our meaning, beginning with positions which we presume will be controverted by none.'

Dr. Channing, after showing that the mind, the body, and even self-love, are parts of our nature which cannot well be dispensed with, thus proceeds:—

'Now, it is not true that self-love is our only principle, or that it constitutes ourselves any more than other principles; and the wrong done to our nature by such modes of speech, needs to be resisted. Our nature has other elements or constituents, and vastly higher ones, to which self-love was meant to minister, and which are at war with its excesses. For example, we have reason or intellectual energy given us for the pursuit and acquisition of truth; and this is essentially a disinterested principle, for truth, which is its object, is of a universal, impartial nature. The great province of the intellectual faculty is to acquaint the individual with the laws and order of the divine system; a system, which spreads infinitely beyond himself, and of which he forms a small part; which embraces innumerable beings equally favoured by God, and which proposes, as its sublime and beneficent end, the ever-growing good of the whole. Again, human nature has a variety of affections, corresponding to our domestic and most common relations; affections, which in multitudes overpower self-love, which make others the chief object of our care, which nerve the arm for ever-recurring toil by day, and strengthen the wearied frame to forego the slumbers of the night. Then there belongs to every man the general sentiment of humanity, which responds to all human sufferings—to a stranger's tears and groans,

and often prompts to great sacrifices for his relief. Above all, there is the moral principle, that which should especially be called a man's self; for it is clothed with a kingly authority over his whole nature, and was plainly given to bear sway over every desire. This is evidently a disinterested principle. Its very essence is impartiality. It has no respect of persons. It is the principle of justice, taking the rights of all under its protection, and frowning on the least wrong, however largely it may serve ourselves. This moral nature especially delights in, and enjoins a universal charity, and makes the heart thrill with exulting joy, at the sight or hearing of magnanimous deeds, of perils fronted, or death endured in the cause of humanity. Now, these various principles, and especially the last, are as truly ourselves as self-love. When a man thinks of himself, these ought to occur to him as his chief attributes. He can hardly injure himself more than by excluding these from his conception of himself, and by making self-love the great constituent of his nature.

'We have urged these remarks on the narrow sense often given to the word *self*, because we are persuaded that it leads to degrading ideas of human nature, and to the pernicious notion that we practise a virtuous self-sacrifice in holding it in contempt. We would have it understood, that high faculties form this despised self, as truly as low desires; and we would add, that when these are faithfully unfolded, this self takes rank among the noblest beings in the universe. To illustrate this thought, we ask the reader's attention to an important, but much-neglected, view of virtue and religion. These are commonly spoken of in an abstract manner, as if they were distinct from ourselves—as if they were foreign existences, which enter the human mind, and dwell there in a kind of separation from itself. Now, religion and virtue, wherever they exist, are the mind itself, and nothing else. A good man's piety and virtue are not distinct possessions; they are himself, and all the glory which belongs to them, belongs to himself. What is religion? Not a foreign inhabitant—not something alien to our nature, which comes and takes up its abode in the soul. It is the soul itself, lifting itself up to its Maker. What is virtue? It is the soul listening to, and revering and obeying a law which belongs to its very essence—the law of duty. We sometimes smile when we hear men decrying human nature, and in the same breath extolling religion to the skies, as if religion were any thing more than human nature acting in obedience to its chief law. Religion and virtue, as far as we possess them, are ourselves; and the homage which is paid to these attributes, is in truth a tribute to the soul of man. Self-crucifixion, then, should it exclude self-reverence, would be any thing but virtue.

'We would briefly suggest another train of thought leading to the same result. Self-crucifixion, or self-renunciation, is a work, and work requires an agent. By whom, then, is it accomplished? We answer, by the man himself, who is the subject of it. It is he who is summoned to the effort. He is called by a voice within, and by the law of God, to put forth power over himself, to rule his own spirit, to subdue every passion. Now, this inward power, which self-crucifixion supposes and demands, is the most signal proof of a high nature which can be given. It is the most illustrious power which God confers. It is a sovereignty worth more than that over outward nature. It is the chief constituent of the noblest order of virtues; and its greatness, of course, demonstrates the greatness of the human mind, which is perpetually bound and summoned to put it forth. But this is not all; self-crucifixion has an object, an end. And what is it? Its great end is to give liberty and energy to our nature. Its aim is not to break down the soul, but to curb those lusts and passions which "war against the soul," that the moral and intellectual faculties may rise into new life, and may manifest their divine original. Self-crucifixion, justly viewed, is the suppression of the passions, that the power and progress of thought, and conscience, and pure love, may be unrestrained. It is the destruction of the brute, that the angel may unfold itself within. It is founded on our godlike capacities, and the expansion and glory of these is the end. Thus the very duty, which by some is identified with self-contempt, implies and imposes self-reverence. It is the belief and the choice of perfection, as our inheritance and our end.'

This is extremely well meant, and very ably executed. There is a *primâ philosophiâ* view of the subject, which is, we think, above the ordinary level of polemical reasoning in our own country. In the line of argument adopted by our author, there is a strong reflection of the original and masterly views of the innate capacity of the soul for piety and goodness, insisted on in Bishop Butler's *Sermons*—a work which has fallen into neglect, partly because of the harshness and obscurity of its style, but more because it contains neither a libel on human nature, nor a burlesque upon religion. There is much in the above train of thought silently borrowed from this profound work. Dr. Channing's argument is, we think, good and sound against the misanthropes in philosophy, and the cynics in religion, who alike maintain the absolute falsity of all human virtue; but the Bishop of Cambray might say, that, with respect to him, it was not a practical answer, so much as a verbal evasion; neither meeting his views nor removing the source of his complaints. Fenelon assuredly, in wishing to annihilate self, did not wish to extirpate charity and faith, but to

crush the old serpent, the great enemy of these. There is no doubt of the capacity of the soul for good and evil; the only question is, which principle prevails and triumphs. The satirist and the man of the world laugh at the pretension to superior sanctity and disinterestedness; the pious enthusiast may then be excused if he weeps at the want of them.

How far does that likeness to God, and sympathy with the whole human race, which Fenelon deprecates the want of, and Dr. Channing boasts of, as the inseparable attribute and chief ornament of man, really take place or not in the present state of things, and as a preparation for another and infinitely more important one? If we regard the moral capacity of man, *self* is a unit that counts millions. Its essence and its glory, says our optimist, is to comprehend the whole human race in its benevolent regards. Does it do so? The understanding runs along the whole chain of being; the affections stop, for the most part, at the first link in the chain. Sense, appetite, pride, passion, engross the whole of this self, and leave it nearly indifferent, if not averse, to all other claims on its attention. In order that the moral attainments should keep pace with the vaunted capacity of man, knowledge should be identified with feeling. We know that there are a million of other beings of as much worth, of the same nature, made in the image of God like ourselves. Have we the same sympathy with every one of these? Do we feel a million times more for all of them put together, than for ourselves? The least pain in our little finger gives us more concern and uneasiness, than the destruction of millions of our fellow-beings. Fenelon laments bitterly and feelingly this disparity between duty and inclination, this want of charity, and eating of self into the soul. What is the consequence of the disproportionate ratios in which the head and the heart move? This paltry *self*, looking upon itself as of more importance than all the rest of the world, fancies itself the centre of the universe, and would have every one look upon it in the same light. Not being able to sympathize with others as it ought, it hates and envies them; is mad to think of its own insignificance in the general system; cannot bear a rival or a superior; despises and tramples on inferiors, and would crush and annihilate all pretensions but its own, that it might be *all in all*. The worm puts on the monarch, or the god, in thought and in secret; and it is only when it can do so in fact, and in public, and be the tyrant or idol of its fellows, that it is at ease or satisfied with itself. Fenelon was right in crying out (if it could have done any good) for the crucifying of this importunate self, and putting a better principle in its stead.

Dr. Channing's Essays on Milton and Bonaparte are both done

upon the same false principle, of making out a case *for* or *against*. The one is full of common-place eulogy, the other of common-place invective. They are pulpit-criticisms. An orator who is confined to expound the same texts and doctrines week after week, slides very naturally and laudably into a habit of monotony and paraphrase; is not allowed to be 'wise above what is written;' is grave from respect to his subject, and the authority attached to the truths he interprets; and if his style is tedious or his arguments trite, he is in no danger of being interrupted or taken to task by his audience. Such a person is unavoidably an advocate for certain received principles; often a dull one. He carries the professional license and character out of the pulpit into other things, and still fancies that he speaks 'with authority, and not as the scribes.' He may be prolix without suspecting it; may lay a solemn stress on the merest trifles; repeat truisms, and apologize for them as startling discoveries; may play the sophist, and conceive he is performing a sacred duty; and give what turn or gloss he pleases to any subject,—forgetting that the circumstances under which he declares himself, and the audience which he addresses, are entirely changed. If, as we readily allow, there are instances of preachers who have emancipated themselves from these professional habits, we can hardly add Dr. Channing to the number.

His notice of Milton is elaborate and stately, but neither new nor discriminating. One of the first and most prominent passages is a defence of poetry:—

'Milton's fame rests chiefly on his poetry; and to this we naturally give our first attention. By those who are accustomed to speak of poetry as light reading, Milton's eminence in this sphere may be considered only as giving him a high rank among the contributors to public amusement. Not so thought Milton. Of all God's gifts of intellect, he esteemed poetical genius the most transcendant. He esteemed it in himself as a kind of inspiration, and wrote his great works with something of the conscious dignity of a prophet. We agree with Milton in his estimate of poetry. It seems to us the divinest of all arts; for it is the breathing or expression of that sentiment which is deepest and sublimest in human nature; we mean, of that thirst or aspiration, to which no mind is wholly a stranger, after something purer and lovelier, something more powerful, lofty, and thrilling, than ordinary and real life affords. No doctrine is more common among Christians than that of man's immortality; but it is not so generally understood, that the germs or principles of his whole future being are *now* wrapped up in his soul, as the rudiments of the future plant in the seed. As a necessary result of this constitution, the soul, possessed and moved by these mighty though infant

energies, is perpetually stretching beyond what is present and visible, struggling against the bounds of its earthly prison-house, and seeking relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal being. This view of our nature, which has never been fully developed, and which goes farther towards explaining the contradictions of human life than all others, carries us to the very foundation and sources of poetry. He who cannot interpret by his own consciousness what we have now said, wants the true key to works of genius. He has not penetrated those sacred recesses of the soul, where poetry is born and nourished, and inhales immortal vigour, and wings herself for her heavenward flight. In an intellectual nature, framed for progress and for higher modes of being, there must be creative energies, powers of original and ever-growing thought; and poetry is the form in which these energies are chiefly manifested. It is the glorious prerogative of this art, that it "makes all things new" for the gratification of a divine instinct. It indeed finds its elements in what it actually sees and experiences, in the worlds of matter and mind; but it combines and blends these into new forms and according to new affinities; breaks down, if we may so say, the distinctions and bounds of nature; imparts to material objects life, and sentiment, and emotion, and invests the mind with the powers and splendours of the outward creation; describes the surrounding universe in the colours which the passions throw over it, and depicts the mind in those moods of repose or agitation, of tenderness or sublime emotion, which manifest its thirst for a more powerful and joyful existence. To a man of a literal and prosaic character, the mind may seem lawless in these workings; but it observes higher laws than it transgresses, the laws of the immortal intellect; it is trying and developing its best faculties; and in the objects which it describes, or in the emotions which it awakens, anticipates those states of progressive power, splendour, beauty, and happiness, for which it was created.'

There is much more to the same purpose: The whole, to speak freely, is a laboured and somewhat tumid paraphrase on Lord Bacon's definition of poetry, (which has been often paraphrased before,) where he prefers it to history, 'as having something divine in it, and representing characters and objects not as they are, but as they ought to be.' This is the general feature of our author's writings; they cannot be called mere common-place, but they may be fairly termed *ambitious* common-place: That is, he takes up the newest and most plausible opinion at the turn of the tide, or just as it is getting into vogue, and would fain arrogate both the singularity and the popularity of it to himself. He hits the public between what they are tired of hearing, and what they never heard before. He has here, however,

put the seal of orthodoxy on poetry, and we are not desirous to take it off. If he is inclined to stand sponsor to the Muses, and confirm their offspring at the Fount, he is welcome to do so. It is curious to see strict Professors for a long time denouncing and excommunicating Poetry as a wanton, and then, when they can no longer help it, clasping hands with her as the hand-maid of truth; and instead of making her the daughter of 'the father of lies,' identifying her with the vital spirit of religion and our happiest prospects.

Dr. Channing is aware, however, that poetry is sometimes liable to abuse, and has given a handle to the ungodly; and as a set-off and salvo to this objection, has a fling at Lord Byron, as the demon who scatters 'poison and death;' while Sir Walter Scott is the beneficent genius of poetry, unfolding and imparting new energies and the most delightful impulses to the human breast. In pronouncing the latter sentence, he bows to popular opinion; in the former he considers just as properly what he owes to his profession.

The bulk of the account of Milton, both as a poet and a prose-writer, is, we are constrained to say, mere imitation or amplification of what has been said by others. He observes, *ex cathedrâ*, and with due gravity, that the *forte* of Milton is sublimity—that the two first books of *Paradise Lost* are unrivalled examples of that quality. He then proceeds to show, that he is not without tenderness or beauty, though he has not the graphic minuteness of Cowper or of Crabbe; he next praises his versification in opposition to the critics—dwells on the freshness and innocence of the picture of Adam and Eve in Paradise—maintains that our sympathy with Satan is nothing but the admiration of moral strength of mind—acknowledges the harshness and virulence of Milton's controversial writings, but blames Dr. Johnson for doing so. All this we have heard or said before. We are not edified at all, nor are we greatly flattered by it. It is as if we should convey a letter to a friend in America, and should find it transcribed and sent back to us with a heavy postage.

We do not, then, set much store by our author's criticisms, because they sometimes seem to be, in a great measure, borrowed from our own lucubrations. We set still less store by his politics, for they are borrowed from others. We have no objection to the most severe or caustic probing of the character of the late ruler of France; but we *do* object, in the name both of history and philosophy, to misrepresentations and falsehoods, as the ground-work of such remarks. When England has exploded them, half in shame, and half in anger, the harpy echo lingers in America. The ugly mask has been taken off; but Dr. Channing chooses to lecture on the mask in preference to the head. It would serve no useful purpose, however, to follow him in

the details of his *Analysis of the Character of Bonaparte*. But we shall extract one of his most elaborate passages, in which he favours us with his opinion of the victors at Waterloo and Trafalgar:—

'The conqueror of Napoleon, the hero of Waterloo, undoubtedly possesses great military talents; but we have never heard of his eloquence in the senate, or of his sagacity in the cabinet; and we venture to say, that he will leave the world without adding one new thought on the great themes, on which the genius of philosophy and legislature has meditated for ages. We will not go down for illustration to such men as Nelson, a man great on the deck, but debased by gross vices, and who never pretended to enlargement of intellect. To institute a comparison, in point of talent and genius, between such men and Milton, Bacon, and Shakspeare, is almost an insult to these illustrious names. Who can think of these truly great intelligences; of the range of their minds through heaven and earth; of their deep intuition into the soul; of their new and glowing combinations of thought; of the energy with which they grasped and subjected to their main purpose the infinite materials of illustration which nature and life afford; who can think of the forms of transcendent beauty and grandeur which they created, or which were rather emanations of their own minds; of the calm wisdom, and fervid, impetuous imagination which they conjoined; of the dominion which they have exercised over so many generations, and which time only extends and makes sure; of the voice of power, in which, though dead, they still speak to nations, and awaken intellect, sensibility, and genius, in both hemispheres;—who can think of such men, and not feel the immense inferiority of the most gifted warriors, whose elements of thought are physical forces and physical obstructions, and whose employment is the combination of the lowest class of objects on which a powerful mind can be employed?'

We are here forcibly reminded of Fielding's character of Mr. Abraham Adams. 'Indeed, if this good man had an enthusiasm, or what the vulgar call a blind side, it was this: he thought a Schoolmaster the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest of all schoolmasters, neither of which points he would have given up to Alexander the Great at the head of his army.' So Dr. Channing very gravely divides greatness into different sorts, and places himself at the top among those who *talk* about things—commanders at the bottom among those who only *do* them. He finds fault with Bonaparte for not coming up to his standard of greatness; but in order that he may not, raises this standard too high for humanity. To put it in force would be to leave the ancient and modern world as bare of great names as the wilds of North America. To make

common sense of it, any one great man must be all the others. Homer only sung of battles, and it was honour enough for Alexander to place his works in a golden cabinet. Dr. Channing allows Bonaparte's supremacy in war; but disputes it in policy. How many persons, from the beginning of the world, have united the two in a greater degree, or wielded more power in consequence? If Bonaparte had not gained a single battle, or planned a single successful campaign; if he had not scattered Coalition after Coalition, but invited the Allies to march to Paris; if he had not quelled the factions, but left them to cut one another's throats and his own; if he had not ventured on the *Concordat*, or framed a Code of Laws for France; if he had encouraged no art or science or man of genius; if he had not humbled the pride of 'ancient thrones,' and risen from the ground of the people to an equal height with the Gods of the earth,—showing that the art and the right to reign is not confined to a particular race; if he had been any thing but what he was, and had done nothing, he would then have come up to Dr. Channing's notions of greatness, and to his boasted standard of a hero! We in Europe, whether friends or foes, require something beyond this negative merit: we think that Cæsar, Alexander, and Charlemagne, were 'no babies;' we think that to move the great masses of power and bind opinions in a spell, is as difficult as the turning a period or winding up a homily; and we are surprised that stanch republicans, who complain that the world bow to birth and rank alone, should turn with redoubled rage against intellect, the instant it became a match for pride and prejudice, and was the only thing that could be opposed to them with success, or could extort a moment's fear or awe for human genius or human nature.

Dr. Channing's style is good, though in general too laboured, formal, and sustained. All is brought equally forward,—nothing is left to tell for itself. In the attempt to be copious, he is tautological; in striving to explain every thing, he overloads and obscures his meaning. The fault is the uniform desire to produce an effect, and the supposition that this is to be done by main force.

In one sermon, Dr. Channing insists boldly and loudly on the necessity that American preachers should assume a loftier style, and put forth energies and pretensions to claim attention in proportion to the excited tone of public feeling, and the advances of modern literature and science. He reproaches them with their lukewarmness, and points out to them, as models, the novels of Scott and the poetry of Byron. If Dr. Channing expects a grave preacher in a pulpit to excite the same interest as a tragedy hero on the stage, or a discourse on the meaning of a text of Scripture to enchain the feelings like one

of the Waverley Novels, it will be a long time first. The mere proposal is *putting the will for the deed*, and an instance of that republican assurance and rejection of the idea of not being equal to any person or thing, which convinces pretenders of this stamp that there is no reason why they should not do all that others can, and a great deal more into the bargain.

FLAXMAN'S LECTURES ON SCULPTURE

Vol. L.] [*October* 1829.

These Lectures were delivered at the Royal Academy in an annual Course, instituted expressly for that purpose. They are not, on the whole, ill calculated to promote the object for which they were originally designed,—to guide the taste, and stimulate the enquiries of the student; but we should doubt whether there is much in them that is likely to interest the public. They may be characterised as the work of a sculptor by profession—dry and hard; a meagre outline, without colouring or adventitious ornament. The Editor states, that he has left them scrupulously as he found them: there are, in consequence, some faults of grammatical construction, of trifling consequence; and many of the paragraphs are thrown into the form of notes, or loose memorandums, and read like a table of contents. Nevertheless, there is a great and evident knowledge of the questions treated of; and wherever there is knowledge, there is power, and a certain degree of interest. It is only a pen guided by inanity or affectation, that can strip such subjects of instruction and amusement. Otherwise, the body of ancient or of modern Art is like the loadstone, to which the soul vibrates, responsive, however cold or repulsive the form in which it appears. We have, however, a more serious fault to object to the present work, than the mere defects of style, or mode of composition. It is with considerable regret and reluctance, we confess, that though it may add to the student's knowledge of the art, it will contribute little to the *understanding* of it. It abounds in rules rather than principles. The examples, authorities, precepts, are full, just, and well-selected. The terms of art are unexceptionably applied; the different styles very properly designated; the mean is distinguished from the lofty; due praise is bestowed on the *graceful*, the *grand*, the *beautiful*, the *ideal*; but the reader comprehends no more of the meaning of these qualities at the end of the work than he did at the beginning. The tone of the Lectures is dogmatical rather than philosophical. The judgment for the most part is sound, though no new light is thrown on the

grounds on which it rests. Mr. Flaxman is contented to take up with traditional maxims, with adjudged cases, with the acknowledged theory and practice of art: and it is well that he does so; for when he departs from the habitual bias of his mind, and attempts to enter into an explanation or defence of first principles, the reasons which he advances are often weak, warped, insufficient, or contradictory. His arguments are neither solid nor ingenious: They are merely quaint and gratuitous. If we were to hazard a general opinion, we should be disposed to say that a certain setness and formality, a certain want of flexibility and power, ran through the character of his whole mind. His compositions as a sculptor are classical,—cast in an approved mould; but, generally speaking, they are elegant outlines,—poetical abstractions converted into marble, yet still retaining the essential character of words; and the Professor's opinions and views of art as here collected, exhibit barely the surface and crust of commonly-received maxims, with little depth or originality. The characteristics of his mind were precision, elegance, cool judgment, industry, and a laudable and exclusive attachment to *the best*. He wanted richness, variety, and force. But we shall not dwell farther on these remarks here; as examples and illustrations of them will occur in the course of this article.

The first Lecture, on the history of early British Sculpture, will be found to contain some novel and curious information. At its very commencement, however, we find two instances of perverse or obscure reasoning, which we cannot entirely pass over. In allusion to the original institution and objects of the Royal Academy, the author observes, that 'as the study of Sculpture was at that time confined within narrow limits, so the appointment of a Professorship in that art was not required, until the increasing taste of the country had given great popularity to the art itself, and native achievements had called on the powers of native Sculpture to celebrate British heroes and patriots.' Does Mr. Flaxman mean by this to insinuate that Britain had neither patriots nor heroes to boast of, till after the establishment of the Royal Academy, and a little before that of the Professorship of Sculpture? If so, we cannot agree with him. It would be going only a single step farther to assert that the study of Astronomy had not been much encouraged in this country, till the discovery of the *Georgium Sidus* was thought to call for it, and for the establishment of an Observatory at Greenwich! In the next page, the Lecturer remarks, 'Painting is honoured with precedence, because Design or Drawing is more particularly and extensively employed in illustration of history. Sculpture immediately follows in the enumeration, because the two arts possess the same common principles, expressed

by Painting in colour, and by Sculpture in form.' Surely, there is here some confusion, either in the thoughts or in the language. First, Painting takes precedence of Sculpture, because it illustrates history by design or form, which is common to both; next, Sculpture comes after Painting, because it illustrates by form, what Painting does *not* illustrate by form, but by colour. We cannot make any sense of this. It is from repeated similar specimens that we are induced to say, that when Mr. Flaxman reasons, he reasons ill. But to proceed to something more grateful. The following is a condensed and patriotic sketch of the rise and early progress of Sculpture in our own country:

'The Saxons destroyed the works of Roman grandeur in Britain, burnt the cities from sea to sea, and reduced the country to barbarism again; but when these invaders were settled in their new possessions, they erected poor and clumsy imitations of the Roman buildings themselves had ruined. The Saxon Painting is rather preferable to their Sculpture, which, whether intended to represent the human or brutal figure, is frequently both horrible and burlesque. The buildings erected in England from the settlement of the Saxons to the reign of Henry I., continued nearly the same plain, heavy repetitions of columns and arches. So little was Sculpture employed in them, that no sepulchral statue is known in England before the time of William the Conqueror.

'Immediately after the Roman Conquest, figures of the deceased were carved, in bas-relief, on their gravestones, examples of which may be seen in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, representing two abbots of that church, and in Worcester Cathedral, those of St. Oswald and Bishop Wulstan. The Crusaders returned from the Holy Land; eager to imitate the arts and magnificence of other countries, they began to decorate the architecture with rich foliage, and to introduce statues against the columns; as we find in the west door of Rochester Cathedral, built in the reign of Henry I. Architecture now improved; Sculpture also became popular. The custom of carving a figure of the deceased in bas-relief on the tomb, seems likely to have been brought from France, where it was continued, in imitation of the Romans. Figures placed against columns might also be copied from examples in that country, of which one remarkable instance was a door in the church of St. Germain de Prez, in Paris, containing several statues of the ancient kings of France, projecting from columns; a work of the 10th century, of which there are prints in Montfaucon's *Antiquities*.

'Sculpture continued to be practised with such zeal and success, that in the reign of Henry III. efforts were made deserving our respect

and attention at this day. Bishop Joceline rebuilt the Cathedral Church of Wells from the pavement, which having lived to finish and dedicate, he died in the year of our Lord 1242. The west front of this church equally testifies the piety and comprehension of the Bishop's mind; the sculpture presents the noblest, most useful and interesting subjects possible to be chosen. On the south side, above the west door, are alto-relievos of the Creation in its different parts, the Deluge, and important acts of the Patriarchs. Companions to these on the north side are alto-relievos of the principal circumstances in the life of our Saviour. Above these are two rows of statues larger than nature, in niches, of kings, queens, and nobles, patrons of the church, saints, bishops, and other religious, from its first foundation to the reign of Henry III. Near the pediment is our Saviour come to judgment, attended by angels and his twelve apostles. The upper arches on each side, along the whole of the west front, and continued in the north and south ends, are occupied by figures rising from their graves, strongly expressing the hope, fear, astonishment, stupefaction, or despair, inspired by the presence of the Lord and Judge of the world in that awful moment. In speaking of the execution of such a work, due regard must be paid to the circumstances under which it was produced, in comparison with those of our own times. There were neither prints nor printed books to assist the artist. The Sculptor could not be instructed in Anatomy, for there were no Anatomists. Some knowledge of Optics, and a glimmering of Perspective, were reserved for the researches of so sublime a genius as Roger Bacon, some years afterwards. A small knowledge of Geometry and Mechanics was exclusively confined to two or three learned monks in the whole country; and the principles of those sciences, as applied to the figure and motion of man and inferior animals, were known to none! *Therefore* this work is *necessarily ill drawn*, and deficient in principle, and much of the sculpture is rude and severe; yet in parts there is a beautiful simplicity, an irresistible sentiment, and sometimes a grace, excelling more modern productions.

'It is very remarkable that Wells Cathedral was finished in 1242, two years after the birth of Cimabue, the restorer of painting in Italy; and the work was going on at the same time that Nicolo Pisano, the Italian restorer of sculpture, exercised the art in his own country: it was also finished forty-six years before the Cathedral of Amiens, and thirty-six before the Cathedral of Orvieto was begun; and it seems to be the first specimen of such magnificent and varied sculpture, united in a series of sacred history, that is to be found in Western Europe. It is, therefore, probable that the general idea of the work might be brought from the East by some of the Crusaders. But there are two

arguments strongly in favour of the execution being English: the family name of the Bishop is English, "Jocelyn Troteman"; and the style, both of sculpture and architecture, is wholly different from the tombs of Edward the Confessor and Henry III., which were by Italian artists.

'The reign of Edward I. produced a new species of monument. When Eleanor the beloved wife of that monarch died, who had been his heroic and affectionate companion in the Holy War, he raised some crosses of magnificent architecture, adorned with statues of his departed queen, wherever her corpse rested on the way to its interment in Westminster Abbey. Three of these crosses still remain, at Northampton, Geddington, and Waltham. The statues have considerable simplicity and delicacy; they partake of the character and grace particularly cultivated in the school of Pisano; and it is not unlikely, as the sepulchral statue and tomb of Henry III. were executed by Italians, that these statues of Queen Eleanor might be done by some of the numerous travelling scholars from Pisano's school.

'The long and prosperous reign of Edward III. was as favourable to literature and liberal arts, as to the political and commercial interests of the country. So generally were painting, sculpture, and architecture encouraged and employed, that besides the buildings raised in this reign, few sacred edifices existed, which did not receive additions and decorations. The richness, novelty, and beauty of architecture may be seen in York and Gloucester Cathedrals, and many of our other churches: besides the extraordinary fancy displayed in various intricate and diversified figures which form the mullions of windows, they were occasionally enriched with a profusion of foliage and historical sculpture, equally surprising for beauty and novelty. In the chancel of Dorchester Church, near Oxford, are three windows of this kind, one of which, besides rich foliage, is adorned with twenty-eight small statues relating to the genealogy of our Saviour; and the other two with alto-relievos from acts of his life.'

Mr. Flaxman then proceeds to trace the progress of Sculpture, and the growing passion for it in this country, through the reign of Henry VII. to the period when its prospects were blighted by the Reformation, and many of its monuments defaced by the Iconoclastic fury of the Puritans and zealots in the time of Charles I. The Lecturer seems to be of opinion that the genius of sculpture in our island was arrested, in the full career of excellence, and when it was approaching the goal of perfection, by these two events; which drew aside the public attention, and threw a stigma on the encouragement of sacred sculpture; whereas, it would perhaps be just as fair to

argue, that these events would never have happened, had it not been for a certain indifference in the national character to mere outward impressions, and a slowness to appreciate, or form an enthusiastic attachment to objects that appeal only to the imagination and the senses. We may be influenced by higher and more solid principles, —reason and philosophy; but that makes nothing to the question. Mr. Flaxman bestows great and deserved praise on the monuments of Aylmer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, and Edmund Crouchback, in Westminster Abbey, which are by English artists, whose names are preserved; but speaks slightingly of the tomb of Henry VII. and his wife, in Henry VII.'s Chapel, by Torregiano; from whom, on trivial and insufficient grounds, he withholds the merit of the other sculptures and ornaments of the chapel. This is prejudice, and not wisdom. We think the tomb alone will be monument enough to that artist in the opinion of all who have seen it. We have no objection to, but on the contrary applaud the Lecturer's zeal to repel the imputation of incapacity from British art, and to detect the lurking traces and doubtful prognostics of it in the records of our early history; but we are, at the same time, convinced that tenaciousness on this point creates an unfavourable presumption on the other side; and we make bold to submit, that whenever the national capacity bursts forth in the same powerful and striking way in the Fine Arts that it has done in so many others, we shall no longer have occasion to praise ourselves for what we either have done, or what we are to do:—the world will soon be loud in the acknowledgment of it. Works of ornament and splendour must dazzle and claim attention at the first sight, or they do not answer their end. They are not like the deductions of an abstruse philosophy, or even improvements in practical affairs, which may make their way slowly and under-ground. They are not a light placed under a bushel, but like 'a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid.' To *appear* and to *be*, are with them the same thing. Neither are we much better satisfied with the arguments of the learned professor to show that the series of statuary in Wells Cathedral is of native English workmanship. The difference of style from the tombs of Edward the Confessor and Henry III. by Italians, can be of little weight at a period when the principles of art were so unsettled, and each person did the best he could, according to his own taste and knowledge; and as to the second branch of the evidence, viz. that 'the family name of the Bishop is English, Jocelyn Troteman,' it sounds too much like a parody on the story of him who wanted to prove his descent from the 'Admirable Crichton,' by his having a family cup in his possession with the initials A. C.!

We dwell the longer and more willingly on the details and recollections of the early works of which the author speaks so feelingly, as first informed with life and sentiment, because all relating to that remote period of architecture and sculpture, exercises a peculiar charm and fascination over our minds. It is not art in its 'high and palmy state,' with its boasted refinements about it, that we look at with envy and wonder, so much as in its first rude attempts and conscious yearning after excellence. They were, indeed, the favoured of the earth, into whom genius first breathed the breath of life; who, born in a night of ignorance, first beheld the sacred dawn of light—those Deucalions of art, who, after the deluge of barbarism and violence had subsided, stood alone in the world, and had to sow the seeds of countless generations of knowledge. We can conceive of some village Michael Angelo, with a soul too mighty for its tenement of clay, whose longing aspirations after truth and good were palsied by the refusal of his hand to execute them,—struggling to burst the trammels and trying to shake off the load of discouragement that oppressed him: What must be his exultation to see the speaking statue, the stately pile, rise up slowly before him,—the idea in his mind embodied out of nothing, without model or precedent,—to see a huge cathedral heave its ponderous weight above the earth, or the solemn figure of an apostle point from one corner of it to the skies; and to think that future ages would, perhaps, gaze at the work with the same delight and wonder that his own did, and not suffer his name to sink into the same oblivion as those who had gone before him, or as the brutes that perish;—this was, indeed, to be admitted into the communion, the 'holiest of holies' of genius, and to drink of the waters of life freely! Art, as it springs from the source of genius, is like the act of creation: it has the same obscurity and grandeur about it. Afterwards, whatever perfection it attains, it becomes mechanical. Its strongest impulse and inspiration is derived, not from what it has done, but from what it has to do. It is not surprising that from this state of anxiety and awe with which it regards its appointed task,—the unknown bourne that lies before it, such startling revelations of the world of truth and beauty are often struck out when one might least expect it, and that Art has sometimes leaped at one vast bound from its cradle to its grave! Mr. Flaxman, however, strongly inculcates the contrary theory, and is for raising up Art to its most majestic height by the slow and circuitous process of an accumulation of rules and machinery. He seems to argue that its advance is on a gradually inclined plane, keeping pace and co-extended with that of Science; 'growing with its growth and strengthening with its strength.' It appears to us that this is not rightly to weigh

the essential differences either of Science or of Art; and that it is flying in the face both of fact and argument. He says, it took sculpture nine hundred or a thousand years to advance from its first rude commencement to its perfection in Greece and Egypt: But we must remember, that the greatest excellence of the Fine Arts, both in Greece, Italy, and Holland, was concentrated into little more than a century; and again, if Art and Science were synonymous, there can be no doubt that the knowledge of anatomy and geometry is more advanced in England in the present day than it was at Athens in the time of Pericles; but is our sculpture therefore superior? The answer to this is, 'No; but it ought to be, and it will be.' Spare us, good Mr. Prophesier! Art cannot be transmitted by a receipt, or theorem, like Science; and cannot therefore be improved *ad libitum*: It has inseparably to do with individual nature and individual genius.

The Second Lecture is on Egyptian Sculpture, and here Mr. Flaxman displays the same accurate information and diligent research as before. The Egyptian statues, the Sphinx, the Memnon, &c. were, as is well known, principally distinguished for their size, and the immense labour and expense bestowed upon them. The critic thus justly characterizes their style and merits:

'The Egyptian statues stand equally poised on both legs, having one foot advanced, the arms either hanging straight down on each side; or, if one is raised, it is at a right angle across the body. Some of the statues sit on seats, some on the ground, and some are kneeling; but the position of the hands seldom varies from the above description; their attitudes are of course simple, rectilinear, and without lateral movement; the faces are rather flat, the brows, eyelids, and mouth formed of simple curves, slightly but sharply marked, and with little expression; the general proportions are something more than seven heads high; the form of the body and limbs rather round and effeminate, with only the most evident projections and hollows. Their tunics, or rather draperies, are in many instances without folds. Winckelman has remarked, that the Egyptians executed quadrupeds better than human figures; for which he gives the two following reasons: first, that as professions in that country were hereditary, genius must be wanting to represent the human form in perfection; secondly, That superstitious reverence for the works of their ancestors prevented improvements. This is an amusing, but needless hypothesis: for there are statues in the Capitoline Museum with as great a breadth, and choice of grand parts proper to the human form, as ever they represented in their lions, or other inferior animals. In addition to these observations on Egyptian statues, we may remark, the forms of their hands and feet are gross; they have

no anatomical detail of parts, and are totally deficient in the grace of motion. This last defect, in all probability, was not the consequence of a superstitious determination to persist in the practice of their ancestors; it is accounted for in another and better way.

'Pythagoras, after he had studied several years in Egypt, sacrificed a hundred oxen in consequence of having discovered, that a square of the longest side of a right-angled triangle is equal to the two squares of the lesser sides of the same triangle; and thence it follows, that the knowledge of the Egyptians could not have been very great at that time in geometry. This will naturally account for that want of motion in their statues and relievos, which can only be obtained by a careful observation of nature, assisted by geometry.'

This is, we apprehend, one of the weak points of Mr. Flaxman's reasoning. That geometry may be of great use to fix and ascertain certain general principles of the art, we are far from disputing; but surely it was no more necessary for the Egyptian sculptor to wait for the discovery of Pythagoras's problem before he could venture to detach the arms from the sides, than it was for the Egyptians themselves to remain swathed and swaddled up like mummies, without the power of locomotion, till Pythagoras came with his geometrical diagram to set their limbs at liberty. If they could do this without a knowledge of mechanics, the sculptor could not help seeing it, and imperfectly copying it, if he had the use of his senses or his wits about him. The greater probability is, that the sepulchral statues were done from, or in imitation of the mummies; or that as the imitation of variety of gesture or motion is always the most difficult, these stiff and monotonous positions were adopted (and subsequently adhered to from custom) as the safest and easiest. After briefly noticing the defects of the Hindoo and other early sculpture, the author proceeds to account for the improved practice of the Greeks on the same formal and mechanic principles.

'We find,' he says, 'upon these authorities (Vitruvius and the elder Pliny), that geometry and numbers were employed to ascertain the powers of motion and proportions; optics and perspective (as known to the ancients) to regulate projections, hollows, keeping, diminution, curvatures, and general effects in figures, groups, insulated or in relief, with accompaniments; and anatomy, to represent the bones, muscles, tendons, and veins, *as they appear on the surface of the human body and inferior animals.*

'In this enlightened age, when the circle of science is so generally and well understood—when the connexion and relation of one branch with another is demonstrated, and their principles applied from necessity and conviction, wherever possibility allows, in the liberal and

mechanical arts, as well as all the other concerns of life—no one can be weak or absurd enough to suppose it is within the ability and province of human genius, without the principles of science previously acquired—by *slight observation only*—to become possessed of the forms, characters, and essences of objects, in such a manner as to represent them with truth, force, and pathos at once! No; we are convinced by reason and experience, that "life is short and art is long;" and the perfection of all human productions depends on the indefatigable accumulation of knowledge and labour through a succession of ages.'—P. 55.

This paragraph, we cannot but think, proceeds altogether on a false estimate: it is a misdirection to the student. In following up the principles here laid down, the artist's life would not only be short, but misspent. Is there no medium, in our critic's view of this matter, between a 'slight observation' of nature, and scientific demonstration? If so, we will say there can be no fine art at all: For mere abstract and formal rules cannot produce truth, force, and pathos in individual forms; and it is equally certain that 'slight observation' will not answer the end, if all but learned pedantry is to be accounted casual and superficial. This is to throw a slur on the pursuit, and an impediment in the way of the art itself. Mr. Flaxman seems here to suppose that our observation is profound and just, not according to the delicacy, comprehensiveness, or steadiness of the attention we bestow upon a given object: but depends on the discovery of some other object which was before hid; or on the intervention of mechanical rules, which supersede the exercise of our senses and judgments—as if the outward appearance of things was concealed by a film of abstraction, which could only be removed by the spectacles of books. Thus, anatomy is said to be necessary 'to represent the bones, muscles tendons, and veins, as they appear on the surface of the human body;' so that it is to be presumed, that the anatomist, when he has with his knife and instruments laid bare the internal structure of the body, sees at a glance what he did not before see; but that the artist, after poring over them all his life, is blind to the external appearance of veins, muscles, &c., till the seeing what is concealed under the skin enables him for the first time to see what appears through it. We do not deny that the knowledge of the internal conformation helps to explain and to determine the *meaning* of the outward appearance; what we object to as unwarrantable and pernicious doctrine, is substituting the one process for the other, and speaking slightly of the study of nature in the comparison. It shows a want of faith in the principles and purposes of the Art itself, and a wish to confound and prop it up with the grave mysteries and formal pretensions of Science;

which is to take away its essence and its pride. The student who sets to work under such an impression, may accumulate a great deal of learned lumber, and envelope himself in diagrams, demonstrations, and the whole circle of the sciences; but while he is persuaded that the study of nature is but a 'slight' part of his task, he will never be able to draw, colour, or *express* a single object, farther than this can be done by a rule and compasses. The crutches of science will not lend wings to genius. Suppose a person were to tell us, that if he pulled off his coat and laid bare his arm, this would give us (with all the attention we could bestow upon it) no additional insight into its form, colour, or the appearance of veins and muscles on the surface, unless he at the same time suffered us to *flay it;* should we not laugh in his face as wanting common sense, or conclude that he was laughing at us? So the late Professor of Sculpture lays little stress in accounting for the progress of Grecian art on the perfection which the human form acquired, and the opportunities for studying its varieties and movements in the Olympic exercises; but considers the whole miracle as easily solved, when the anatomist came with his probe and ploughed up the surface of the flesh, and the geometrician came with his line and plummet, and demonstrated the centre of gravity. He sums up the question in these words: 'In the early times of Greece, Pausanias informs us the twelve Gods were worshipped in Arcadia, under the forms of rude stones; and before Dædalus the statues had eyes nearly shut, the arms attached to their sides, and the legs close together! but *as geometry, mechanics, arithmetic, and anatomy improved, painting and sculpture acquired action, proportion and detailed parts.*' As to the slight account that is made in this reasoning of the immediate observation of visible objects, the point may be settled by an obvious dilemma: Either the eye sees the whole of any object before it; or it does not. If it sees and comprehends the whole of it with all its parts and relations, then it must retain and be able to give a faithful and satisfactory resemblance, without calling in the aid of rules or science to prevent or correct errors and defects; just as the human face or form is perfectly represented in a looking-glass. But if the eye sees only a small part of what any visible object contains in it,—has only a glimmering of colour, proportion, expression &c., then this incipient and imperfect knowledge may be improved to an almost infinite degree by close attention, by study and practice, and by comparing a succession of objects with one another; which is the proper and essential province of the artist, independently of abstract rules or science. On further observation we notice many details in a face which escaped us at the first glance; by a study of faces and of mankind practically, we perceive expressions which the generality do

not perceive; but this is not done by rule. The fallacy is in supposing that all that the first naked or hasty observation does not give, is supplied by science and general theories, and not by a closer and continued observation of the thing itself, so that all that belongs to the latter department is necessarily casual and slight.

Mr. Flaxman enforces the same argument by quoting the rules laid down by Vitruvius, for ascertaining the true principles of form and motion. This writer says, 'If a man lies on his back, his arms and legs may be so extended, that a circle may be drawn round, touching the extremities of his fingers and toes, the centre of which circle shall be his navel: also, that, a man standing upright, the length of his arms when fully extended is equal to his height; thus that the circle and the square equally contain the general form and motion of the human figure.' From these hints, and the profound mathematical train of reasoning with which Leonardo da Vinci has pursued the subject, the author adds, that a complete system of the principles followed by the ancient Greek sculptors may be drawn out: that is to say, that because all the inflections of figure and motion of which the human body is susceptible, are contained within the above-mentioned circle or square, the knowledge of all this formal generality *includes* a knowledge of all the subordinate and implied particulars. The contortions of the Laocoon, the agony of the Children, the look of the Dying Gladiator, the contours of the Venus, the grace and spirit of the Apollo, are all, it seems, contained within the limits of the circle or the square! Just as well might it be contended, that having got a square or oval frame, of the size of a picture by Titian or Vandyke, every one is qualified to paint a face within it equal in force or beauty to Titian or Vandyke.

In the same spirit of a determination to make art a handmaid attendant upon Science, the author thus proceeds: 'Pliny says, lib. xxxiv. c. 8, Leontius, the contemporary of Phidias, first expressed tendons and veins—*primus nervos et venas expressit*—which was immediately after the anatomical researches and improvements of Hippocrates, Democritus, and their disciples; and we shall find in the same manner all the improvements in art followed improvements in science.' Yet almost in the next page, Mr. Flaxman himself acknowledges, that even in the best times of Grecian sculpture, and the era of Phidias and Praxiteles, dissections were rare, and anatomy very imperfectly understood, and cites 'the opinion of the learned Professor of Anatomy, that the ancients artists owed much more to the study of living than dead bodies.' Sir Anthony Carlisle, aware of the deficiencies of former ages in this branch of knowledge, and yet conscious that he himself would be greatly puzzled to carve the

Apollo or the Venus, very naturally and wisely concludes, that the latter depends upon a course of study, and an acquaintance with forms very different from any which he possesses. It is a smattering and affectation of science that leads men to suppose that it is capable of more than it really is, and of supplying the undefined and evanescent creations of art with universal and infallible principles. There cannot be an opinion more productive of presumption and sloth.

The same turn of thought is insisted on in the Fourth Lecture, *On Science*; and indeed nearly the whole of that Lecture is devoted to a fuller developement and exemplification of what appears to us a servile prejudice. It would be unjust, however, to Mr. Flaxman, to suppose, or to insinuate, that he is without a better sense and better principles of art, whenever he trusted to his own feelings and experience, instead of being hoodwinked by an idle theory. Nothing can be more excellent than the following observations which occur towards the conclusion of the Lecture on *Composition*:

'What has been delivered comprises some of the rules for composing, and observations on composition, the most obvious, and perhaps not the least useful. They have been collected from the best works and the best writings, examined and compared with their principles in nature. Such a comprehensive view may be serviceable to the younger student, in pointing his way, preventing error, and showing the needful materials; *but after all, he must perform the work himself!* All rules, all critical discourses, can but awaken the intelligence, and stimulate the will, with advice and directions, for a beginning of that which is to be done. They may be compared to the scaffolding for raising a magnificent palace; it is neither the building nor the decoration, but it is the workman's indispensable help in erecting the walls which enclose the apartments, and which may afterwards be enriched with the most splendid ornaments. Every painter and sculptor feels a conviction that a considerable portion of science is requisite to the productions of liberal art; but he will be equally convinced, that whatever is produced from principles and rules only, added to the most exquisite manual labour, is no more than a mechanical work. Sentiment is the life and soul of fine art; without which it is all a dead letter! Sentiment gives a sterling value, an irresistible charm to the rudest imagery or most unpractised scrawl. By this quality a firm alliance is formed with the affections in all works of art. With an earnest watchfulness for their preservation, we are made to perceive and feel the most sublime and terrific subjects, following the course of sentiment, through the current and mazes of intelligence and passion, to the most delicate and tender ties and sympathies.'

From the account of Grecian sculpture, in the third Lecture, which

is done with care and judgment, we select the following descriptions of the Minerva and Jupiter of Phidias:—

'Within the temple (at the Acropolis of Athens) stood the statue of Minerva, thirty-nine feet high, made by Phidias, of ivory and gold, holding a victory, six feet high, in her right hand, and a spear in her left, her tunic reaching to her feet. She had her helmet on, and the Medusa's head on her ægis; her shield was adorned with the battle of the gods and giants, the pedestal with the birth of Pandora. Plato tells us that the eyes of this statue were precious stones. But the great work of this chief of sculptors, the astonishment and praise of after ages, was the Jupiter at Elis, sitting on his throne, his left hand holding a sceptre, his right extending victory to the Olympian conquerors, his head crowned with olive, and his pallium decorated with birds, beasts, and flowers. The four corners of the throne were dancing victories, each supported by a sphinx, tearing a Theban youth. At the back of the throne, above his head, were the three horns, or seasons, on one side, and on the other the three Graces. On the bar, between the legs of the throne, and the panels, or spaces, between them, were represented many stories—the destruction of Niobe's children, the labours of Hercules, the delivery of Prometheus, the garden of Hesperides, with the different adventures of the heroic ages. On the base, the battle of Theseus with the Amazons; on the pedestal, an assembly of the gods, the sun and moon in their cars, and the birth of Venus. The height of the work was sixty feet. The statue was ivory, enriched with the radiance of golden ornaments and precious stones, and was justly esteemed one of the seven wonders of the world.

'Several other statues of great excellence, in marble and in bronze, are mentioned among the works of Phidias, particularly a Venus, placed by the Romans in the forum of Octavia; two Minervas, one named Callimorphus, from the beauty of its form; and it is likely that the fine statue of this goddess in Mr. Hope's gallery is a repetition in marble of Phidias's bronze, from its resemblance in attitude, drapery, and helmet, to the reverse of an Athenian coin. Another statue by him was an Amazon, called Eutnemon, from her beautiful legs. There is a print of this in the *Museum Pium Clementinum*.'

With the name of Phidias, Mr. Flaxman couples that of Praxiteles, and gives the following spirited sketch of him and his works:—

'Praxiteles excelled in the highest graces of youth and beauty. He is said to have excelled not only other sculptors, but himself, by his marble statues in the Ceramicus of Athens; but his Venus was preferable to all others in the world, and many sailed to Cnidos for the purpose of seeing it. This sculptor having made two statues of

Venus, one with drapery, the other without, the Coans preferred the clothed figure, on account of its severe modesty, the same price being set upon each. The citizens of Cnidos took the rejected statue, and afterwards refused it to King Nicomedes, who would have forgiven them an immense debt in return; but they were resolved to suffer any thing, so long as this statue, by Praxiteles, ennobled Cnidos. The temple was entirely open in which it was placed, because every view was equally admirable. This Venus was still in Cnidos during the reign of the Emperor Arcadius, about 400 years after Christ. Among the known works of Praxiteles are his Satyr, Cupid, Apollo, the Lizard-killer, and Bacchus leaning on a Faun.'

But we must stop short in this list of famous names and enchanting works, or we should never have done. This seems to have been the fabulous age of sculpture, when marble started into life as in a luxurious dream, and men appeared to have no other employment than 'to make Gods in their own image.' The Lecturer bestows due and eloquent praise on the horses in the Elgin collection, which he supposes to have been done under the superintendence, and probably from designs by Phidias; but we are sorry he has not extended his eulogium to the figure of the Theseus, which appears to us a world of grace and grandeur in itself, and to say to the sculptor's art, '*Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther!*' What went before it was rude in the comparison; what came after it was artificial. It is the perfection of *style*, and would have afforded a much better exemplification of the force and meaning of that term than the schoolboy definition adopted in the Lecture on this subject; namely, that as poets and engravers used a *stylos*, or style, to execute their works, the name of the instrument was metaphorically applied to express the art itself. *Style* properly means the mode of representing nature; and this again arises from the various character of men's minds, and the infinite variety of views which may be taken of nature. After seeing the Apollo, the Hercules, and other celebrated works of antiquity, we seem to have exhausted our stock of admiration, and to conceive that there is no higher perfection for sculpture to attain, or to aspire to. But at the first sight of the Elgin Marbles, we feel that we have been in a mistake, and the ancient objects of our idolatry fall into an inferior class or style of art. They are comparatively, and without disparagement of their vast and almost superhuman merit, *stuck-up* gods and goddesses. But a new principle is at work in the others which we had not seen or felt the want of before (not a studied trick, or curious refinement, but an obvious truth, arising from a more intimate acquaintance with, and firmer reliance on, nature;)—a principle of fusion, of motion, so that the marble flows like a wave. The common *antiques* represent

the most perfect forms and proportions, with each part perfectly understood and executed; every thing is brought out; every thing is made as exquisite and imposing as it can be in itself; but each part seems to be cut out of the marble, and to answer to a model of itself in the artist's mind. But in the fragment of the Theseus, the whole is melted into one impression like wax; there is all the flexibility, the malleableness of flesh; there is the same alternate tension and relaxation; the same sway and yielding of the parts; 'the right hand knows what the left hand doeth'; and the statue bends and plays under the framer's mighty hand and eye, as if, instead of being a block of marble, it was provided with an internal machinery of nerves and muscles, and felt every the slightest pressure or motion from one extremity to the other. This, then, is the greatest grandeur of style, from the comprehensive idea of the whole, joined to the greatest simplicity, from the entire union and subordination of the parts. There is no ostentation, no stiffness, no overlaboured finishing. Every thing is in its place and degree, and put to its proper use. The greatest power is combined with the greatest ease: there is the perfection of knowledge, with the total absence of a conscious display of it. We find so little of an appearance of art or labour, that we might be almost tempted to suppose that the whole of these groups were done by means of *casts* from fine nature; for it is to be observed, that the commonest cast from nature has the same *style* or character of union and reaction of parts, being copied from that which has life and motion in itself. What adds a passing gleam of probability to such a suggestion is, that these statues were placed at a height where only the general effect could be distinguished, and that the back and hinder parts, which are just as scrupulously finished as the rest, and as true to the mould of nature, were fixed against a wall where they could not be seen at all; and where the labour (if we do not suppose it to be in a great measure abridged mechanically) was wholly thrown away. However, we do not lay much stress on this consideration; for we are aware that 'the labour we delight in physics pain,' and we believe that the person who *could* do the statue of the Theseus, *would* do it, under all circumstances, and without fee or reward of any kind. We conceive that the Elgin Marbles settle another disputed point of vital interest to the arts. Sir Joshua Reynolds contends, among others, that grandeur of style consists in giving only the *masses*, and leaving out the details. The statues we are speaking of repudiate this doctrine, and at least demonstrate the possibility of uniting the two things, which had been idly represented to be incompatible, as if they were not obviously found together in nature. A great number of parts may be collected into one mass; as, on the other hand, a work

may equally want minute details, or large and imposing masses. Suppose all the light to be thrown on one side of a face, and all the shadow on the other: the *chiaroscuro* may be worked up with the utmost delicacy and pains in the one, and every vein or freckle distinctly marked on the other, without destroying the general effect—that is, the two broad masses of light and shade. Mr. Flaxman takes notice that there were two eras of Grecian art before the time of Pericles and Phidias, when it was at its height. In the first they gave only a gross or formal representation of the objects, so that you could merely say, 'This is a man, that is a horse.' To this clumsy concrete style succeeded the most elaborate finishing of parts, without selection, grace or grandeur. 'Elaborate finishing was soon afterwards' [after the time of Dædalus and his scholars] 'carried to excess: undulating locks and spiral knots of hair like shells, as well as the drapery, were wrought with the most elaborate care and exactness; whilst the tasteless and barbarous character of the face and limbs remained much the same as in former times.' This was the natural course of things, to denote first the gross object; then to run into the opposite extreme, and give none but the detached parts. The difficulty was to unite the two in a noble and comprehensive idea of nature.

We are chiefly indebted for the information or amusement we derive from Mr. Flaxman's work, to the historical details of his subject. We cannot say that he has removed any of the doubts or stumbling-blocks in our way, or extended the landmarks of taste or reasoning. We turned with some interest to the Lecture on *Beauty*; for the artist has left specimens of this quality in several of his works. We were a good deal disappointed. It sets out in this manner: 'That beauty is not merely an imaginary quality, but a real essence, may be inferred from the harmony of the universe; and the perfection of its wondrous parts we may understand from all surrounding nature; and in this course of observation we find, that man has more of beauty bestowed on him as he rises higher in creation.' The rest is of a piece with this exordium,—containing a dissertation on the various gradations of being, of which man is said to be at the top,—on the authority of Socrates, who argues, 'that the human form is the most perfect of all forms, because it contains in it the principles and powers of all inferior forms.' This assertion is either a flat contradiction of the fact, or an *antique* riddle, which we do not pretend to solve. Indeed, we hold the ancients, with all our veneration for them, to have been wholly destitute of philosophy in this department; and Mr. Flaxman, who was taught when he was young to look up to them for light and instruction in the philosophy of art, has engrafted too

much of it on his Lectures. He defines beauty thus: 'The most perfect human beauty is that *most free from deformity*, either of body or mind, and may be therefore defined—The most perfect soul is the most perfect body.'

In support of this truism, he strings a number of quotations together, as if he were stringing pearls:

'In Plato's dialogue concerning the beautiful, he shows the power and influence of mental beauty on corporeal; and in his dialogue, entitled "The greater Hippias," Socrates observes in argument, "that as a beautiful vase is inferior to a beautiful horse, and as a beautiful horse is not to be compared to a beautiful virgin, in the same manner a beautiful virgin is inferior in beauty to the immortal Gods; for," says he, "there is a beauty incorruptible, ever the same." It is remarkable, that, immediately after, he says, "Phidias is skilful in beauty." Aristotle, the Scholar of Plato, begins his Treatise on Morals thus:—"Every art, every method and institution, every action and council, seems to seek some good; therefore the ancients pronounced the beautiful to be good." Much, indeed, might be collected from this philosopher's treatises on morals, poetics, and physiognomy, of the greatest importance to our subject; but for the present we shall produce only two quotations from Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, which contain the immediate application of these principles to the arts of design. In the dialogue between Socrates and the sculptor Clito, Socrates concludes, that "Statuary must represent the emotions of the soul by form;" and in the former part of the same dialogue, Parrhasius and Socrates agree that, "the good and evil qualities of the soul may be represented in the figure of man by painting." In the applications from this dialogue to our subject, we must remember, philosophy demonstrates that rationality and intelligence, although connected with animal nature, rises above it, and properly exists in a more exalted state. From such contemplations and maxims, the ancient artists sublimated the sentiments of their works, expressed in the choicest forms of nature; thus they produced their divinities, heroes, patriots, and philosophers, adhering to the principle of Plato, that "nothing is beautiful which is not good;" it was this which, in ages of polytheism and idolatry, still continued to enforce a popular impression of divine attributes and perfection.'

If the ancient sculptors had had nothing but such maxims and contemplations as these to assist them in forming their statues, they would have been greatly to seek indeed! Take these homilies on the Beautiful and the Good, together with Euclid's Elements, into any country town in England, and see if you can make a modern Athens of it. The Greek artists did not learn to put expression into

their works, because Socrates had said, that 'statuary must represent the emotions of the soul by form;' but he said that they ought to do so, because he had seen it done by Phidias and others. It was from the diligent study and contemplation of the 'choicest forms of nature,' and from the natural love of beauty and grandeur in the human breast, and not from 'shreds and patches,' of philosophy, that they drew their conceptions of Gods and men. Let us not, however, be thought hard on the metaphysics of the ancients: they were the first to propose these questions, and to feel the curiosity and the earnest desire to know what the *beautiful* and the *good* meant. If the will was not tantamount to the deed, it was scarcely their fault; and perhaps, instead of blaming their partial success, we ought rather to take shame to ourselves for the little progress we have made, and the dubious light that has been shed upon such questions since. If the Professor of Sculpture had sought for the principles of beauty in the antique statues, instead of the *scholia* of the commentators, he probably might have found it to resolve itself (according, at least, to their peculiar and favourite view of it) into a certain symmetry of form, answering in a great measure, to harmony of colouring, or of musical sounds. We do not here affect to lay down a metaphysical theory, but to criticise an historical fact. We are not bold enough to say that beauty in general depends on a regular gradation and correspondence of lines, but we may safely assert that Grecian beauty does. If we take any beautiful Greek statue, we shall find that, seen in profile, the forehead and nose form nearly a perpendicular straight line; and that finely turned at that point, the lower part of the face falls by gentle and almost equal curves to the chin. The cheek is full and round, and the outline of the side of the face a general sloping line. In front, the eyebrows are straight, or gently curved; the eyelids full and round to match, answering to that of Belphœbe, in Spenser—

> 'Upon her eyebrows many Graces sat,
> Under the shadow of her even brows:'

The space between the eyebrows is broad, and the two sides of the nose straight, and nearly parallel; the nostrils form large and distinct curves; the lips are full and even, the corners being large; the chin is round, and rather short, forming, with the two sides of the face, a regular oval. The opposite to this, the Grecian model of beauty, is to be seen in the contour and features of the African face, where all the lines, instead of corresponding to, or melting into, one another, in a kind of *rhythmus* of form, are sharp, angular, and at cross purposes. Where strength and majesty were to be expressed by the Greeks, they adopted a greater squareness, but there was the same unity and

correspondence of outline. Greek grace is harmony of movement. The *ideal* may be regarded as a certain predominant quality or character (this may be ugliness or deformity as well as beauty, as is seen in the forms of fauns and satyrs) diffused over all the parts of an object, and carried to the utmost pitch, that our acquaintance with visible models, and our conception of the imaginary object, will warrant. It is extending our impressions farther, raising them higher than usual, from the *actual* to the *possible*.[1] How far we can enlarge our discoveries from the one of these to the other, is a point of some nicety. In treating on this question, our author thus distinguishes the Natural and the Ideal Styles:

'The Natural Style may be defined thus: a representation of the human form, according to the distinction of sex and age, in action or repose, expressing the affections of the soul. The same words may be used to define the Ideal Style, but they must be followed by this addition—*selected from such perfect examples as may excite in our minds a conception of the preternatural.* By these definitions will be understood that the Natural Style is peculiar to humanity, and the Ideal to spirituality and divinity.'

We should be inclined to say, that the female divinities of the ancients were Goddesses because they were *ideal*, rather than that they were *ideal* because they belonged to the class of Goddesses; 'By their own beauty were they deified.' Of the difficulty of passing the line that separates the actual from the imaginary world, some test may be formed by the suggestion thrown out a little way back; *viz.* that the *ideal* is exemplified in systematizing and enhancing any idea whether of beauty or deformity, as in the case of the fauns and satyrs of antiquity. The expressing of depravity and grossness is produced here by approximating the human face and figure to that of the brute; so that the mind runs along this line from one to the other, and carries the wished-for resemblance as far as it pleases. But here both the extremes are equally well known, equally objects of sight and observation: insomuch that there might be a literal substitution of the one for the other; but in the other case, of elevating character and pourtraying Gods as men, one of the extremes is missing; and the combining the two, is combining a positive with an unknown abstraction. To represent a Jupiter or Apollo, we take the best species, (as it seems to us,) and select the best of that species: how we are to get beyond that *best*, without any given form or visible image to refer to, it is not easy to determine. The *ideal*,

[1] Verse and poetry has its source in this principle; it is the harmony of the soul imparted from the strong impulse of pleasure to language and to indifferent things; as a person hearing music walks in a sustained and measured step over uneven ground.

according to Mr. Flaxman, is 'the scale by which to heaven we do ascend;' but it is a hazardous undertaking to soar above reality, by embodying an abstraction. If the ancients could have seen the immortal Gods, with their bodily sense, (as it was said that Jupiter had revealed himself to Phidias,) they might have been enabled to give some reflection or shadow of their countenances to their human likenesses of them: otherwise, poetry and philosophy lent their light in vain. It is true, we may magnify the human figure to any extent we please, for that is a mechanical affair; but how we are to add to our ideas of grace or grandeur, beyond any thing we have ever seen, merely by contemplating grace and grandeur that we have never seen, is quite another matter. If we venture beyond the highest point of excellence of which we have any example, we quit our hold of the natural, without being sure that we have laid our hands on what is truly divine; for that has no earthly image or representative—nature is the only rule or 'legislator.' We may combine existing qualities, but this must be consistently, that is, such as are found combined in nature. Repose was given to the Olympian Jupiter to express majesty; because the greatest power was found to imply repose, and to produce its effects with the least effort. Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom, was represented young and beautiful; because wisdom was discovered not to be confined to age or ugliness. Not only the individual excellencies, but their bond of union, were sanctioned by the testimony of observation and experience. Bacchus is represented with full, exuberant features, with prominent lips, and a stern brow, as expressing a character of plenitude and bounty, and the tamer of savages and wild beasts. But this *ideal* conception is carried to the brink; the mould is full, and with a very little more straining, it would overflow into caricature and distortion. Mercury has wings, which is merely a grotesque and fanciful combination of known images. Apollo was described by the poets (if not represented by the statuary) with a round jocund face, and golden locks, in allusion to the appearance and rays of the sun. This was an allegory, and would be soon turned to abuse in sculpture or painting. Thus we see how circumscribed and uncertain the province of the *ideal* is, when once it advances from 'the most perfect nature to spirituality and divinity.' We suspect the improved Deity often fell short of the heroic original; and the Venus was only the most beautiful woman of the time, with diminished charms and a finer name added to her. With respect to *ideal* expression, it is superior to common *every-day* expression, no doubt; that is, it must be raised to correspond with lofty characters placed in striking situations; but it is tame and feeble compared with what those characters would exhibit in the

supposed circumstances. The expressions in the *Incendio del Borgo* are striking and grand; but could we see the expression of terror in the commonest face in real danger of being burnt to death, it would put all imaginary expressions to shame and flight.

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Mr. Flaxman makes an attempt to vindicate the golden ornaments, and eyes of precious stones, in the ancient statues, as calculated to add to the awe of the beholder, and inspire a belief in their preternatural power. In this point of view, or as a matter of religious faith, we are not tenacious on the subject, any more than we object to the wonder-working images and moving eyes of the patron saints in Popish churches. But the question, as it regards the fine arts in general, is curious, and treated at some length, and with considerable intricacy and learning, by the Lecturer.

'We certainly know,' he says, 'that the arts of painting and sculpture are different in their essential properties. Painting exists by colours only, and form is the peculiarity of sculpture; but there is a principle common to both, in which both are united, and without which neither can exist—and this is drawing; and in the union of light, shadow, and colour, sculpture may be seen more advantageously by the chill light of a winter's day, or the warmer tints of a mid-summer's sun, according to the solemnity or cheerfulness of the subject. These positions will be generally agreed to; but the question before us is, "How far was Phidias successful in adding colours to the sculpture of the Athenian Minerva, and the Olympian Jupiter?"—which examples were followed by succeeding artists.

'We have all been struck by the resemblance of figures in coloured waxwork to persons in fits, and therefore such a representation is particularly proper for the similitude of persons in fits, or the deceased: but the Olympian Jupiter and the Athenian Minerva were intended to represent those who were superior to death and disease. They were believed immortal, and therefore the stillness of these statues, having the colouring of life, during the time the spectator viewed them, would appear divinity in awful abstraction or repose. Their stupendous size alone was preternatural; and the colouring of life without motion increased the sublimity of the statue and the terror of the pious beholder. The effect of the materials which composed these statues has also been questioned. The statues themselves (according to the information of Aristotle, in his book concerning the world) were made of stone, covered with plates of ivory, so fitted together, that at the distance requisite for seeing them, they appeared one mass of ivory, which has much the tint of delicate flesh. The ornaments and garments were enriched with gold, coloured metals, and precious stones.

'Gold ornaments on ivory are equally splendid and harmonious, and in such colossal forms must have added a dazzling glory, like electric fluid running over the surface: the figure, character, and splendour must have had the appearance of an immortal vision in the eyes of the votary.

'But let us attend to the judgment passed on these by the ancients: we have already quoted Quintilian, who says, "they appear to have added something to religion, the work was so worthy of the divinity." Plato says, "the eyes of Minerva were of precious stones," and immediately adds, "Phidias was skilful in beauty." Aristotle calls him "the wise sculptor." An opinion prevailed that Jupiter had revealed himself to Phidias; and the statue is said to have been touched by lightning in approbation of the work. After these testimonies, there seems no doubt remaining of the effect produced by these coloured statues; but the very reasons that prove that colours in sculpture may have the effect of supernatural vision, *fits*, or *death*, prove at the same time that such practice is utterly improper for the general representation of the human figure: *because, as the tints of carnation in nature are consequences of circulation, wherever the colour of flesh is seen without motion, it resembles only death, or a suspension of the vital powers.*

'Let not this application of colours, however, in the instances of the Jupiter and Minerva, be considered as a mere arbitrary decision of choice or taste in the sculptor, to render his work agreeable in the eyes of the beholder. It was produced by a much higher motive. It was the desire of rendering these stupendous forms[1] living and intelligent to the astonished gaze of the votary, and to confound the sceptical by a flash of conviction, that something of divinity resided in the statues themselves.

'The practice of painting sculpture seems to have been common to most countries, particularly in the early and barbarous states of society. But whether we look on the idols of the South Seas, the Etruscan painted sculpture and *terra-cotta* monuments, or the recumbent coloured statues on tombs of the middle ages, we shall generally find the practice has been employed to enforce superstition, or preserve an exact similitude of the deceased.

'These, however, are in themselves perverted purposes. The real ends of painting, sculpture, and all the other arts, are to elevate the mind to the contemplation of truth, to give the judgment a rational determination, and to represent such of our fellow-men as have been benefactors to society, not in the deplorable and fallen

[1] It does not appear that the general form was coloured, as Mr. Flaxman seems to argue.

state of a lifeless and mouldering corpse, but in the full vigour of their faculties when living, or in something corresponding to the state of the good received among the just made perfect.'

All this may be very true and very fine; what the greater part of it has to do with the colouring of statues, we are at a loss to comprehend. Whenever Mr. Flaxman gives a reason, it usually makes against himself; but his faith in his conclusion is proof against contradiction. He says, that adding flesh-colour to statues gives an appearance of death to them, *because the colour of life without motion argues a suspension of the vital powers.* The same might be said of pictures which have colour without motion; but who would contend, that because a chalk-drawing has the tints of flesh (denoting circulation) superadded to it, this gives it the appearance of a person in fits, or of death? On the contrary, Sir Joshua Reynolds makes it an objection to coloured statues, that, as well as wax-work, they were too much like life. This was always the scope and 'but-end' of his theories and rules on art, that it should avoid coming in too close contact with nature. Still we are not sure that this is not the true reason, *viz.* that the imitation ought not to amount to a deception, nor be effected by gross or identical means. We certainly hate all wax-work, of whatever description; and the idea of colouring a statue gives us a nausea; but as is the case with most bigoted people, the clearness of our reasoning does not keep pace with the strength of our prejudices. It is easy to repeat that the object of painting is colour and form, while the object of sculpture is form alone; and to ring the changes on the purity, the severity, the abstract truth of sculpture. The question returns as before; Why should sculpture be more pure, more severe, more abstracted, than any thing else? The only clew we can suggest is, that from the immense pains bestowed in sculpture on mere form, or in giving solidity and permanence, this predominant feeling becomes an exclusive and unsociable one, and the mind rejects every addition of a more fleeting or superficial kind as an excrescence and an impertinence. The form is hewn out of the solid rock; to tint and daub it over with a flimsy, perishable substance, is a mockery and a desecration, where the work itself is likely to last for ever. A statue is the utmost possible developement of form; and that on which the whole powers and faculties of the artist have been bent: It has a right then, by the laws of intellectual creation, to stand alone in that simplicity and unsullied nakedness in which it has been wrought. *Tangible form* (the primary idea) is blind, averse to colour. A statue, if it were coloured at all, ought to be inlaid, that is, done in mosaic, where the colour would be part of the solid materials. But this would be an undertaking beyond human strength.

Where art has performed all that it can do, why require it to begin its task again? Or if the addition is to be made carelessly and slightly, it is unworthy of the subject. Colour is at best the mask of form: paint on a statue is like paint on a real face,—it is not of a piece with the work, it does not belong to the face, and justly obtains the epithet of *meretricious*.

Mr. Flaxman, in comparing the progress of ancient and modern sculpture, does not shrink from doing justice to the latter. He gives the preference to scriptural over classical subjects; and, in one passage, seems half inclined to turn short round on the Greek mythology and morality, and to treat all those Heathen Gods and Goddesses as a set of very improper people:—as to the Roman bas-reliefs, triumphs, and processions, he dismisses them as no better than so many 'vulgar, military gazettes.' He, with due doubt and deference, places Michael Angelo almost above the ancients. His statues will not bear out this claim; and we have no sufficient means of judging of their paintings. In his separate groups and figures in the *Sistine Chapel*, there is, we indeed think, a conscious vastness of purpose, a mighty movement, like the breath of Creation upon the waters, that we see in no other works, ancient or modern. The forms of his Prophets and Sibyls are like moulds of *thought*. Mr. Flaxman is also strenuous in his praises of the *Last Judgment*; but on that we shall be silent, as we are not converts to his opinion. Michael Angelo's David and Bacchus, done when he was young, are clumsy and unmeaning; even the grandeur of his Moses is confined to the horns and beard. The only works of his in sculpture which sustain Mr. Flaxman's praise, are those in the chapel of Lorenzo de Medici at Florence; and these are of undoubted force and beauty.

We shall conclude our extracts with a description of Pisa, the second birth-place of art in modern times; and in speaking of which, the learned Lecturer has indulged a vein of melancholy enthusiasm, which has the more striking effect as it is rare with him.

'The Cathedral of Pisa, built by Buskettus, an architect from Dulichium, was the second sacred edifice (St. Mark's, in Venice, being the first) raised after the destruction of the Roman power in Italy. It has received the honour of being allowed by posterity to have taken the lead in restoring art; and indeed the traveller, on entering the city gates, is astonished by a scene of architectural magnificence and singularity not to be equalled in the world. Four stupendous structures of white marble in one group—the solemn Cathedral, in the general parallelogram of its form, resembling an ancient temple, which unites and simplifies the arched divisions of its exterior; the Baptistry, a circular building, surrounded with arches

and columns, crowned with niches, statues, and pinnacles, rising to an apex in the centre, terminated by a statue of the Baptist; the Falling Tower, which is thirteen feet out of the perpendicular, a most elegant cylinder, raised by eight rows of columns surmounting each other, and surrounding a staircase; the Cemetery, a long square corridor, 400 by 200 feet, containing the ingenious works of the improvers of painting down to the sixteenth century. This extraordinary scene, in the evening of a summer's day, with a splendid red sun setting in a dark-blue sky, the full moon rising in the opposite side, over a city nearly deserted, affects the beholder's mind with such a sensation of magnificence, solitude, and wonder, that he scarcely knows whether he is in this world or not.'

After the glossiness, and splendour, and gorgeous perfection of Grecian art, the whole seems to sink into littleness and insignificance, compared with the interest we feel in the period of its restoration, and in the rude, but mighty efforts, it made to reach to its former height and grandeur;—with more anxious thoughts, and with a more fearful experience to warn it—with the ruins of the old world crumbling around it, and the new one emerging out of the gloom of Gothic barbarism and ignorance—taught to look from the outspread map of time and change beyond it—and if less critical in nearer objects, commanding a loftier and more extended range, like the bursting the bands of death asunder, or the first dawn of light and peace after darkness and the tempest!

WILSON'S LIFE AND TIMES OF DANIEL DEFOE

Vol. I.] [*January* 1830.

This is a very good book, but spun out to too great a length. Mr. Wilson will not bate an inch of his right to be tediously minute on any of the topics that pass in review before him, whether they relate to public or private matters, the author's life and writings, or the answers to them by Tutchin and Ridpath. He is indeed so well furnished with materials, and so full of his subject, that instead of studying to reduce the size of his work, he very probably thinks he has shown forbearance in not making it longer. We could not wish a more distinct or honest chronicler. There is scarcely a sentence, or a sentiment in his work, that we disapprove, unless we were to quarrel with what is said in dispraise of the *Beggar's Opera*. In general, his opinions are sound, liberal, and enlightened, and as clear and intelligible in the expression as the intention is upright and manly.

The style is plain and unaffected, as is usually the case where a writer thinks more of his subject than of himself. Mr. Wilson appears as the zealous and consistent friend of civil and religious liberty; and not only never swerves from, or betrays his principles, but omits no opportunity of avowing and enforcing them. He has 'excellent iteration in him.' If he repeats the old story over again, that liberty is a blessing, and slavery a curse,—if he depicts persecution and religious bigotry in the same unvarying and odious colours, and never sees the phantom of *divine right* without proceeding to have a tilting-bout with it,—as honest Hector Macintire could not be prevented by his uncle, Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, from encountering a *seal* whenever he saw one,—we confess, notwithstanding, that we like this pertinacity better than some people's indifference or tergiversation. The biographer of Defoe, like Defoe himself, is a Whig, and of the true stamp; that is, he is a staunch and incorruptible advocate of Whig principles, and of the great aims the leaders of the Revolution had in view, as opposed to the absurd and mischievous doctrines of their adversaries; though this does not bribe his judgment, but rather makes him more anxious in pointing out and lamenting the follies, weaknesses, and perversity of spirit, which sometimes clogged their proceedings, defeated their professed objects, and turned the cause of justice and freedom into a by-word, and the instrument of a cabal.

Mr. Wilson cannot be charged with going too copiously or indiscriminately into the details of Defoe's private life. The anecdotes and references of this kind are 'thinly scattered to make up a show,' —*rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* Little was known before on this head, and the author, with all his diligence and zeal, has redeemed little from obscurity and oblivion. But he makes up for the deficiency of personal matter, by a superabundance of literary and political information. All that is to be gleaned of Defoe's individual history might be stated in a short compass.

Daniel Defoe, or Foe, as the name was sometimes spelt, was born in London in the year 1661, in the parish of St. Giles's, Cripplegate. His father, James Foe, was a butcher; and his grandfather, Daniel, the first person among his ancestors of whom any thing is positively known, was a substantial yeoman, who farmed his own estate at Elton, in Northamptonshire. The old gentleman kept a pack of hounds, which indicated both his wealth and his principles as a royalist; for the Puritans did not allow of the sports of the field, though his grandson (*contra bonos mores*) sometimes indulged in them. In alluding to this circumstance, Defoe says, 'I remember my grandfather had a huntsman, who used the same familiarity (that of giving

party names to animals) with his dogs; and he had his Roundhead and his Cavalier, his Goring and his Waller; and all the generals in both armies were hounds in his pack, till, the times turning, the old gentleman was fain to scatter his pack, and make them up of more dog-like sirnames.' It was probably from this relative that Defoe inherited a freehold estate, of which he was not a little vain; and which seems to have influenced his opinions in his theory of the right of popular election, and of the British constitution. His father was a person of a different cast—a rigid dissenter; and from him his son appears to have imbibed the grounds of his opinions and practice. He was living at an advanced age in 1705. The following curious memorandum, signed by him at this period, throws some light on his character, as well as on that of the times:—'Sarah Pierce lived with us, about fifteen or sixteen years since, about two years, and behaved herself so well, that we recommended her to Mr. Cave, that godly minister, which we should not have done, had not her conversation been according to the gospel. From my lodgings, at the Bell in Broad Street, having lately left my house in Throgmorton Street, October 10, 1705. Witness my hand, James Foe.'

Young Defoe was brought up for the ministry, and educated with this view at the dissenting academy of Mr. Charles Morton, at Newington-Green, where Mr. Samuel Wesley, the father of the celebrated John Wesley, and who afterwards wrote against the dissenters, was brought up with him. Whether from an unsettled inclination, or his father's inability to supply the necessary expenses, he never finished his education here. He not long after joined in Monmouth's rebellion in 1685, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner with the rest of the Duke's followers. It is supposed he owed his safety to his being a native of London, and his person not being known in the west of England, where that movement chiefly took place. He now applied himself to business, and became a kind of hose-factor. He afterwards set up a Dutch tile-manufactory at Tilbury, in Essex, and derived great profit from it; but his being sentenced to the pillory for his *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, (one of the truest, ablest, and most seasonable pamphlets ever published,) and the heavy fine and imprisonment that followed, involved him in distress and difficulty ever after. He occasionally, indeed, seemed to be emerging from obscurity, and to hold his head above water for a time, (and at one period had built himself a handsome house at Stoke-Newington, which is still to be seen there,) but this show of prosperity was of short continuance; all of a sudden, we find him immersed in poverty and law as deeply as ever; and it would appear that, with all his ability and industry, however he might be formed to

serve his country or delight mankind, he was not one of those who are born to make their fortunes,—either from a careless, improvident disposition, that squanders away its advantages, or a sanguine and restless temper, that constantly abandons a successful pursuit for some new and gilded project. Defoe took an active and enthusiastic part in the Revolution of 1688, and was personally known to King William, of whom he was a sort of idolater, and evinced a spirit of knight-errantry in defence of his character and memory whenever it was attacked. He was released from prison (after lying there two years) by the interference and friendship of Harley, who introduced him to Queen Anne, by whom he was employed on several confidential missions, and more particularly in effecting the Union with Scotland. His personal obligations to Harley fettered his politics during the four last years of Queen Anne, and threw a cloud over his popularity in the following reign, but fixed no stain upon his character, except in the insinuations and slanders of his enemies, whether of his own or the opposite party. It was not till after he had retired from the battle, covered with scars and bruises, but without a single trophy or reward, in acknowledgment of his indefatigable and undeniable services in defence of the cause he had all his life espoused—when he was nearly sixty years of age, and struck down by a fit of apoplexy —that he thought of commencing novel-writer, for his amusement and subsistence. The most popular of his novels, *Robinson Crusoe*, was published in the year 1719, and he poured others from his pen, for the remaining ten or twelve years of his life, as fast, and with as little apparent effort, as he had formerly done lampoons, reviews, and pamphlets.

We are in the number of those who, though we profess ourselves mightily edified and interested by the researches of biography, are not always equally gratified by the actual result. Few things, in an ordinary life, can come up to the interest which every reader of sensibility must take in the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy;' and it cannot be denied, that the first perusal of that work makes a part of the illusion:—the roar of the waters is in our ears,—we start at the print of the foot in the sand, and hear the parrot repeat the well-known sounds of 'Poor Robinson Crusoe! Who are you? Where do you come from; and where are you going?'—till the tears gush, and in recollection and feeling we become children again! One cannot understand how the author of this world of abstraction should have had any thing to do with the ordinary cares and business of life; or it almost seems that he should have been fed, like Elijah, by the ravens. What boots it then to know that he was a hose-factor, and the owner of a tile-kiln in Essex

—that he stood in the pillory, was over head and ears in debt, and engaged in eternal literary and political squabbles? It is, however, well to be assured that he was a man of worth as well as genius; and that, though unfortunate, and having to contend all his life with vexations and disappointments, with vulgar clamour and the hand of power, yet he did nothing to leave a blot upon his name, or to make the world ashamed of the interest they must always feel for him. If there is nothing in a farther acquaintance with his writings to raise our admiration higher, (which could hardly happen without a miracle,) there is a great deal to enlarge the grounds of it, and to strengthen our esteem and confidence in him. To say nothing of the incessant war he waged with crying abuses, with priestcraft and tyranny, and the straight line of consistency and principle which he followed from the beginning to the end of his career,—he was a powerful though unpolished satirist in verse, (as his *True-born Englishman* sufficiently proves);—was master of an admirable prose style;—in his *Review*, (a periodical paper which was published three times a-week for nine years together,) led the way to that class of essay-writing, and those dramatic sketches of common life and manners, which were afterwards so happily perfected by Steele and Addison;—in his *Essays on Trade*, anticipated many of those broad and liberal principles which are regarded as modern discoveries;—in his Moral Essays, and some of his Novels, undoubtedly set the example of that minute description and perplexing casuistry, of which Richardson so successfully availed himself;—was among the first to advocate the intellectual equality, and the necessity of improvements in the education of women;—suggested the project of *Saving Banks*, and an *Asylum for Idiots*;—among other notable services and claims to attention, by his thoughts on the best mode of watching and lighting the streets of the metropolis, might be considered as the author of the modern system of police;—and even in party matters, and the heats and rancorous differences of jarring sects, generally seized on that point of view which displayed most moderation and good sense, and in his favourite conclusions and arguments, was half a century before his contemporaries, who, for that reason, made common cause against him.

Defoe 'was too fond of the right to pursue the expedient;' and had much too dry, hard, and concentrated an understanding of the truth, to allow of any compromise with it from courtesy to the feelings or opinions of others. This kept him in perpetual hot water. It was a virtue, but carried to a repeated excess. It set the majority against him, and turned his dearest friends into his bitterest foes. If you make no concessions to the world, you must expect no favours from it. Our author's blindness and simplicity on this head, amount

to the *dramatic*. He went on censuring and contradicting all sects and parties, setting them to rights, recommending peace to them, praying each to give up its darling prejudice and absurdity; and then he wonders that 'a man of peace and reason,' like himself, should be the butt of universal contumely and hatred. If an individual differs from you in common with others, you do not so much mind it—it is the act of a body, and implies no particular assumption of superior wisdom or virtue; but if he not only differs from you, but from his own *side* too, you then can endure the scandal no longer; but join to hunt him down as a prodigy of unheard-of insolence and presumption, and to get rid of him and his boasted honesty and independence together. While, therefore, the author of the *True-born Englishman*, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, and the *Legion Petition*, thought he was deserving well of God and his country, he was 'heaping coals of fire on his own head.' Nothing produces such antipathy in others as a total seeming want of sympathy with them. Defoe was urged on by a straight-forwardness and sturdiness of feeling, which did not permit him to give up a single iota of his convictions; but it was 'stuff of the conscience' with him; there was nothing of spleen, malevolence, or the spirit of contradiction in his nature. Still, we consider him rather as an acute, zealous, and well-informed partisan, than as a general and dispassionate reasoner. He was a distinguished polemic, rather than a philosopher. Though he exercised his understanding powerfully and variously, yet it was always under the guidance of a certain banner—in support of 'a foregone conclusion.' He was too much in the heat of the battle—too constantly occupied in attacking or defending one side or the other, to consider fairly whether both might not be in the wrong. He asked himself, (as he was obliged to do in his own vindication,)—'Why am I in the right?' and gave admirable reasons for it, supposing it to be so; but he never thought of asking himself the farther question,—'Am I in the right or no?' This would have been entering on a new and unexplored tract, and might have led to no very welcome results. As an example of what we mean—Defoe, though a most strenuous and persevering advocate for the rights of conscience and toleration to those dissenters who, in his view, agreed with the church in the *essentials* of Christianity, was, notwithstanding, far from being disposed to extend the same indulgence to Socinians, Anabaptists, or other heretical persons. Of course, he would conceive that he, and those with whom he acted in concert, were not criminal in excluding others from the privilege in question; but he did not enlarge his views beyond this point, so as to change places with those who entirely differed with him; and in this respect fell short of the philosophical

and liberal opinions of Locke, and even Toland, who placed toleration on the broad ground of a general principle, whatever exceptions might arise from particular circumstances, and urgent political expediency. We should, therefore, hardly be warranted in admitting Defoe into the class of perfectly free and unshackled speculative thinkers; though we certainly may rank him among the foremost of polemical writers for vigour, and ability of execution.

It will be easily conceived, that in the variety of subjects of which his author treated, and in the number and importance of the events in which he took part, either in person, or with his pen, Mr. Wilson, whose industry and patience seem to have increased with the field he had to traverse, is at no loss for materials either for reflection or illustration. The only fault is, that the life of Defoe is sometimes lost in the history of the events of his time, like a petty current in the ocean. Nevertheless, the writer has traced these events and their causes so faithfully and clearly, and with such pertinent reflections, that we readily pass over this fault, and can forgive the slowness of a pencil that only *drags* from the weight of truth and good intention.

Mr. Wilson has extracted from Defoe's *Review* (7. p. 296,) his account of the origin and application of the far-famed terms—Whig and Tory; and it is so curiously circumstantial, that we shall lay it before our readers, though some of them, no doubt, are already well acquainted with it.

'The word Tory is Irish, and was first made use of there in the time of Queen Elizabeth's wars in Ireland. It signified a kind of robber, who being listed in neither army, preyed in general upon the country, without distinction of English or Spaniard. In the Irish massacre, anno 1641, you had them in great numbers, assisting in every thing that was bloody and villainous; and particularly when humanity prevailed upon some of the Papists to preserve Protestant relations. These were such as chose to butcher brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, the dearest friends and nearest relations; these were called *Tories*. In England, about the year 1680, a party of men appeared among us, who, though pretended Protestants, yet applied themselves to the ruin and destruction of their country. They began with ridiculing the Popish plot, and encouraging the Papists to revive it. They pursued their designs, in banishing the Duke of Monmouth and calling home the Duke of York; then in abhorring, petitioning, and opposing the bill of exclusion; in giving up charters, and the liberties of their country, to the arbitrary will of their prince; then in murdering patriots, persecuting dissenters, and at last, in setting up a Popish prince, on pretence of hereditary right, and tyranny on pretence of passive obedience. These men,

for their criminal preying upon their country, and their cruel, bloody disposition, began to show themselves so like the Irish thieves and murderers aforesaid, that they quickly got the name of Tories. Their real god-father was Titus Oates, and the occasion of his giving them the name as follows—the author of this happened to be present: There was a meeting of some honest people in the city, upon the occasion of the discovery of some attempt to stifle the evidence of the witnesses [to the Popish plot], and tampering with Bedloe and Stephen Dugdale. Among the discourse, Mr. Bedloe said, he had letters from Ireland, that there were some Tories to be brought over hither, who were privately to murder Dr. Oates and the said Bedloe. The Doctor, whose zeal was very hot, could never after this hear any man talk against the plot, or against the witnesses, but he thought he was one of these Tories, and called almost every man a Tory that opposed him in discourse; till at last the word Tory became popular, and it stuck so close to the party in all their bloody proceedings, that they had no way to get it off; so at last they owned it, just as they do now the name of High-flyer.

'As to the word *Whig*, it is Scotch. The use of it began there when the western men, called Cameronians, took arms frequently for their religion. Whig was a word used in those parts for a kind of liquor the Western Highlandmen used to drink, whose composition I do not remember,[1] and so became common to the people who drank it. It afterwards became a denomination of the poor harassed people of that part of the country, who, being unmercifully persecuted by the government, against all law and justice, thought they had a civil right to their religious liberties, and therefore frequently resisted the arbitrary power of their princes. These men, tired with innumerable oppressions, ravishings, murders, and plunderings, took up arms about 1681, being the famous insurrection at Bothwell-bridge. The Duke of Monmouth, then in favour here, was sent against them by King Charles, and defeated them. At his return, instead of thanks for the good service, he found himself ill-treated for using them too mercifully; and Duke Lauderdale told King Charles with an oath, that the Duke had been so civil to Whigs, because he was a Whig himself in his heart. This made it a court-word; and in a little time, all the friends and followers of the Duke began to be called Whigs; and they, as the other party did by the word Tory, took it freely enough to themselves.'

The cruelties of this reign, and the sufferings of the people, for

[1] 'It was the refuse, or what was called the *whig*, of the milk; and was applied,' says a Tory writer, 'to what was still more sour, a Scotch Presbyterian.'

conscience and religion, on this and so many other occasions, formed a striking contrast to the voluptuous effeminacy and callous indifference of the court; and this insolent and pampered want of sympathy, by adding wanton insult to intolerable injury, undermined all respect for the throne in the minds of a numerous class of the community, and took away all pity for its fall in the succeeding reign. Charles, however, who seemed to oppress his subjects only for his amusement, and played the tyrant as an appendage to the character of the fine gentleman, did not proceed to extremities, or throw off the mask, whatever his secret wishes or designs might be, by openly attacking large masses of power and opinion. James was a true monk,—a blind, narrow, gloomy bigot; and did not stop short in his mad and obstinate career, till he drove the country to rebellion, and himself into exile. As the French wit said of him, seeing him coming out of a Popish chapel abroad, 'There goes a very honest gentleman, who gave up a kingdom for a mass.' By great good luck he succeeded, for it turned upon a nice point at last. On James's accession to the throne, addresses of loyalty and devotion poured in from all quarters, notwithstanding his well-known principles and designs. An address from the Middle Temple expressed the sentiments of that body of scholars and gentlemen, in a strain of fulsome servility. The University of Oxford promised to obey him 'without limitations or restrictions;' and the king's promise, in his speech from the throne, (says Burnet,) passed for a thing so sacred, that those were looked upon as ill-bred who put into their address, 'our religion established by law, excepted.' The pulpits resounded with thanksgiving sermons, and the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance; and the clergy were forward in tendering the unconditional surrender of their rights and liberties for themselves, their fellow-subjects, and their posterity. If James did not before think himself *God's vicegerent upon earth*, he must have thought so now. But he no sooner took them at their word, and proceeded to appoint papists to be heads of colleges, and to induct them to protestant livings, and to send the bishops to the Tower for refusing to set their seal to his arbitrary mandates; that is, he no sooner alarmed the clergy for their authority spiritual, and their revenues temporal,—so that judgment began, as Dr. Sherlock expressed it, in the house of God,—than they turned round, and sent their loyalty and their monarch a-packing together. Had it not been for this attack on the Church of England, the People of England might have been left to struggle with the hand of power and oppression how they could; and would have received plenty of reproofs and taunts from orthodox pulpits, on their refractory and unnatural behaviour in resisting lawful authority. Mr.

Wilson has quoted an eloquent passage from Defoe, in which he admirably exposes the indifference of the nation, at this period, to principles, and their short-sightedness as to consequences, till they actually arrived. We give the passage, both for the sense and style. It alludes to the favourers of the *Exclusion Bill.*

'How earnestly did those honest men, whose eyes God had opened to see the danger, labour to prevent the mischiefs of a Popish tyranny? How did they struggle in Parliament, and out of Parliament, to exclude a prince that did not mock them, but really promised them in as plain language as actions could speak, that he would be a tyrant; that he would erect arbitrary power upon the foot of our liberties, as soon as he had the reins in his hands? How were the opposers of this inundation oppressed by power, and borne down in the stream of it? And when they were massacred by that bloody generation, how did they warn us at their deaths of the mischiefs that were coming? Yet all this while, deaf as the adder to the voice of the charmer, stupid and hard as the nether millstone, we would not believe, nor put our hand to our deliverance, till that same Popery, that same tyranny, and that very party we struggled with, were sent to be our instructors; and then we learnt the lesson presently. Tyranny taught us the value of liberty; oppression, how to prize the fence of laws; and Popery showed us the danger of the Protestant religion. Then passive pulpits beat the ecclesiastical drum of war; absolute subjection took up arms; and obedience for conscience-sake resisted divine right. And who taught them this heterodox lesson? Truly, the same schoolmaster they had hanged us for telling them of, the same dispensing power they had enacted, and the same tyranny they had murdered us for opposing.'

Defoe gives a very curious account of the insults offered to James II. after his fall, and of which he was an eye-witness.

'The king (after the Prince of Orange had entered London) had proceeded to the Kentish coast, and embarked on board a vessel with the intention of going to France; but being detained by the wind, Sir Edward Hales, one of his attendants, sent his footman to the post-office at Feversham, where his livery was recognised. Being traced to the vessel, it was immediately boarded by some people from the town, who, mistaking the king for a popish priest, searched his person, and took from him four hundred guineas, with some valuable seals and jewels. The rank of the individual treated with so much indignity was not long undiscovered; for, there being a constable present who happened to know him, he threw himself at his feet, and, begging him to forgive the rudeness of the mob, ordered restitution of what had been taken from him. The king,

receiving the jewels and seals, distributed the money amongst them. After this, he was conducted to Feversham, where fresh insults were heaped upon fallen majesty.'—'While there, he found himself in the hands of the rabble, who, upon the noise of the king's being taken, thronged from all parts of the country to Feversham, so that the king found himself surrounded, as it were, with an army of furies; the whole street, which is very wide and large, being filled, and thousands of the noisy gentry got together. His majesty, who knew well enough the temper of the people at that time, but not what they might be pushed on to do at such a juncture, was very uneasy, and spoke to some of the gentlemen, who came with more respect, and more like themselves, to the town on that surprising occasion. The king told them he was in their hands, and was content to be so, and they might do what they pleased with him; but whatever they thought fit to do, he desired they would quiet the people, and not let him be delivered up to the rabble, to be torn in pieces. The gentlemen told his majesty they were sorry to see him used so ill, and would do any thing in their power to protect him; but that it was not possible to quell the tumult of the people. The king was distressed in the highest degree; the people shouting and pressing in a frightful manner to have the door opened. At length, his majesty observing a forward gentleman among the crowd, who ran from one party to another, hallooing and animating the people, the king sent to tell him he desired to speak with him. The message was delivered with all possible civility, and the little Masaniello was prevailed with to come up stairs. The king received him with a courtesy rather equal to his present circumstances than to his dignity; told him, what he was doing might have an event worse than he intended; that he seemed to be heating the people up for some mischief; and that as he had done him no personal wrong, why should he attack him in this manner; that he was in their hands, and they might do what they pleased; but he hoped they did not design to murder him. The fellow stood, as it were, thunderstruck, and said not one word. The king, proceeding, told him he found he had some influence with the rabble, and desired he would pacify them; that messengers were gone to the parliament at London, and that he desired only they would be quiet till their return. What the fellow answered to the king I know not; but as I immediately enquired, they told me he did not say much, but this—"What can I do with them? and, what would you have me do?" But as soon as the king had done speaking, he turned short, and made to the door as fast as he could to go out of the room. As soon as he got fairly to the stair-head, and saw his way open, he turns short about to the gentlemen,

to one of whom he had given the same churlish answer, and raising his voice, so that the king, who was in the next room, should be sure to hear him, he says, "*I have a bag of money as long as my arm, halloo, boys, halloo!*" The king was so filled with contempt and just indignation at the low-spirited insolence of the purse-proud wretch, that it quite took off the horror of the rabble, and only smiling, he sat down and said, "Let them alone, let them do their worst."'

It seems the man was a retired grocer; and Defoe, in his *Complete Tradesman*, (says his biographer,) relates the circumstance, to show, that to be vain of mere wealth denotes a baseness of soul, and is often accompanied by a conduct unworthy of a rational creature.

In the midst of his distress, the King, it appears, had applied for protection to a clergyman, who treated him with cool indifference. The fact is thus noticed by Defoe:

'When the king was taken at Sheerness, and had fallen into the hands of the rabble, he applied himself to a clergyman who was there, in words to this effect: "Sir, it is men of your cloth who have reduced me to this condition; I desire you will use your endeavours to still and quiet the people, and disperse them, that I may be freed from this tumult." The gentleman's answer was cold and insignificant; and going down to the people, he returned no more to the king. Several of the gentry and clergy thereabouts,' adds our author, 'who had formerly preached and talked up this mad doctrine, (passive obedience,) never offered the king their assistance in that distress, which, as a man, whether prince or no, any one would have done: it therefore to me renders their integrity suspected, when they pretended to an absolute submission, and only meant that they expected it from their neighbours, whom they designed to oppress, but resolved never to practise the least part of it themselves, if ever it should look towards them.'

In another place, Defoe observes,

'I never was, I thank God for it, one of those that betrayed him, or any one else. I was never one that flattered him in his arbitrary proceedings, or made him believe I would bear oppression and injustice with a tame Issachar-like temper; those who did so, and then flew in his face, I believe, as much betrayed him as Judas did our Saviour; and their crime, whatever the Protestant interest gained by it, is no way lessened by the good that followed.'

The same spirit of integrity and candour, the same desire to see fair play, and to do justice to all parties,—in a word, the same spirit of common sense and common honesty which marks this passage, runs through all Defoe's writings; and as it raised him up a host of enemies among the abettors and abusers of power, so it left him

neither friends nor shelter in his own party, to whose faults and errors he gave as little quarter; thinking himself bound to condemn them as freely and frankly. Hence he had a life of uneasiness,—an old age of pain. In reading the above description of James's situation, the hand is passed thoughtfully over the brow, and we for a moment forget the crimes of the monarch in the misfortunes of the man. It is laid down by Mr. Burke, that none but mild, inoffensive princes, ever bring themselves to the condition of being objects of insult or pity to their subjects; and that tyrants, who deserve punishment, know well how to guard themselves against it, and 'to keep their seats firm.' Let us see how far this doctrine is made good in the case of James; or how far his own misdeeds brought their rare, but natural punishment upon his head. We will let Mr. Wilson speak to this point:—

'The fate of James,' he says, 'would have been more entitled to pity, if he had not stained his character by so many acts of wanton and cold-blooded cruelty. That his merciless character was well known to the nation, appears by the intrepid retort of Colonel Ayloffe, who had been condemned to death, but was advised by James to make some disclosures, it being in his power to pardon. "I know," says he, "it is in your power, but it is not in your nature, to pardon." That compassion was a total stranger to his breast, no one can doubt who reads the following affecting narrative: Monsieur Roussel, a French protestant divine of great learning and integrity, and minister of the Reformed Church at Montpelier in France, having witnessed the demolition of his own place of worship, soon after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, ventured, at the desire of his people, to preach in the night-time upon its ruins, and was attended by some thousands of his flock. For this offence he was condemned, by the intendant of Languedoc, to be broke upon the wheel; but, having withdrawn from the place, it was ordered that he should be hanged in effigy. After encountering numerous hazards, he succeeded in effecting his escape from France; and reaching Ireland, was chosen pastor of the French church in Dublin. James, who, for the sake of courting popularity, had formerly affected a charitable disposition towards the French refugees, threw off the mask when he landed in that country, and was surrounded by French counsellors. Being no longer under any temptation to disguise his natural temper and his hatred to the reformed religion, he committed one of those breaches of good faith which must for ever consign his name to infamy. For, instead of protecting a stranger who had been persecuted in his own country for a conscientious discharge of his religious duties, and had sought an asylum under the laws of another,

where he had lived for some years in peaceable exile, the base wretch delivered up this unoffending person to the French ambassador, Count D'Avaux, who sent him in chains to France, there to undergo the terrible punishment prepared for him by his inhuman murderers.[1] Such an action requires no comment; nor can any term of reproach be too strong to designate the monster who could lend himself to its perpetration.'

Yet many people, seeing the poor and forlorn figure which the exiled sovereign made with a few followers in the remote and silent court of St. Germain's, wanted to have him back; thinking that, to curtail him of the power to repeat such acts as that just related, and to deluge a country with blood, was the last degree of hardship, and a sad indignity offered to a king! Defoe was not in the number of these sentimentalists; and he had enough to do after his countrymen's 'courage had been screwed to the sticking-place,' to keep it there, and warn them against a relapse into Popery and slavery. One of his first publications had been an Address to the Dissenters, to caution them against accepting the terms of a general Toleration, which, on his accession to the throne, James II. had insidiously held out to all parties, and which was to include Papists as well as Dissenters. This was not a bait for Defoe's keen jealousy and strong repugnance to the encroachments of power to be taken in by. There was, however, some danger that the Dissenters, from their timidity and love of ease, and their being habitually too much engrossed by themselves and their own grievances, might be tempted to purchase the proffered grace at the price of allowing the Papists the same liberty; which was (at this period), under the barefaced pretence of liberality, and a tenderness for scrupulous consciences, to throw open the flood-gates of the most unbounded bigotry and intolerance. But the hatred and dread of Popery was, at this time, the ruling passion, in which the Dissenters shared in its utmost rancour and virulence; and this old grudge and hereditary antipathy had the effect of counteracting their natural coldness and phlegm, and a certain narrowness and formality in their views. Some of the weakest among them were, notwithstanding, for running into the snare, and did not easily forgive Defoe for pointing it out to them. The Marquis of Halifax had written a pamphlet on the same side of the question, called, 'A Letter to a Dissenter, upon occasion of his Majesty's late Declaration of Indulgence, 1687.' The title of Defoe's work is not now known. In speaking of it himself, some years after, he says,

'The next time I differed with my friends was when King James

[1] Oldmixon's History of England.

was wheedling the Dissenters to take off the penal laws and test, which I could by no means come into. And as in the first I used to say, I had rather the Popish House of Austria should ruin the Protestants in Hungary than the infidel House of Ottoman should ruin both Protestant and Papist by overrunning Germany; so, in the other, I told the Dissenters I had rather the Church of England should pull our clothes off by fines and forfeitures, than that the Papists should fall both upon the Church and the Dissenters, and pull our skins off by fire and faggot.'[1]

The allusion in the foregoing passage is to an early Piece of Defoe's, (not reprinted among his tracts), in which he had drawn his sword (for his weapon would be out) in defence of the Pope against the Turks. The occasion was this: The Hungarian Reformers having been persecuted and proscribed by the Austrian monarch, had risen in arms against him; and the Turks, availing themselves of the opportunity, had marched to their assistance, and laid siege to Vienna. Most of the English Protestants (as men think the nearest danger greatest, and hate their old enemies most,) were inclined to rejoice at this tumbling of a Popish despot, and the success of their Hungarian brethren. But Defoe, who saw farther than others, (and perhaps took a little pride in doing so,) viewed the matter in a different light, and deprecated the possible triumph of the Crescent over the Cross, and the subjugation of all Christendom, which might be the consequence. Logically speaking, he was right; but prudentially, he was perhaps wrong. The powers of Europe took the alarm as well as he, and combined to rescue the Austrian monarch from the gripe of the Mussulman. They succeeded; but could obtain no terms for the Hungarian peasants. Had the Emperor been left to fight his own battles against the Turks, he might have been frightened into measures of moderation and justice towards his own subjects; and there was, in the meantime, little probability of a Mahometan army overrunning Europe.

Defoe's first publication was a satirical pamphlet, called *Speculum Crape-gownorum*; intended to ridicule the fopperies and affectation of the younger clergy, as a set-off to some severe attacks on the mode of preaching among the Dissenters. This performance bears the date of 1682, when Defoe was only twenty-one, so that he commenced author very young. From that period he hardly ever ceased writing for the rest of his life; and a list of his works would alone fill a long article. The pasquinade just mentioned is attributed, by Mr. Godwin, in his *Lives of the Philipses*, to John Philips; but Mr. Wilson gives it to Defoe, on his own authority; and certainly his

[1] Defoe's 'Appeal to Honour and Honesty.'

report is to be trusted, for he was a person of unchallengeable veracity. He was always a warm partisan of the Dissenters, (among whom he was born and bred,) and was ever ready to take up their quarrel either with wit or argument, for which he got small thanks. He was not, however, to be put off by their dulness or ingratitude. He was old enough to remember the times of their persecution and 'fiery ordeal;' and it is at this source that the spirit of liberty is tempered and steeled to its keenest edge. Defoe's political firmness may, in part, also be traced to this union between the feelings of civil and religious liberty. An attachment to freedom, for the advantages it holds out to society, may be sometimes overruled by a calculation of prudence, or of the opposite advantages held out to the individual; but a resistance to power for conscience-sake, and as a dictate of religious duty, rests on a positive ground, which is not to be shaken or tampered with, and has the seeds of permanence and martyrdom in it. What Mr. Burke calls 'the *Hortus Siccus* of Dissent' is therefore the hot-bed of resistance to the encroachments of ambition; and when, by long-continued struggles, the disqualifications of Dissenters are taken off, and the zeal which had been kept alive by hard usage and penal laws subsides into indifference or scepticism, we doubt whether there is any lever left, in mere public opinion, strong enough to throw off the pressure of unjust and ruinous power.

With these feelings, and, after the fears which he and all good men must have entertained for the safety of their religion, and the freedom of their country, it is not to be wondered at if Defoe hailed the arrival of the Prince of Orange with the greatest joy. He kept the anniversary of his landing, the 4th of November, all his life after. We find an account of him as one of those who went in procession with their Majesties to Guildhall, as a guard of honour, the year following. Oldmixon, who gives the account, has mixed up with it some of his unfounded prejudices against our author:

'Their Majesties,' he says, 'attended (Oct. 29, 1689,) by their royal highnesses the Prince and Princesses of Denmark, and by a numerous train of nobility and gentry, went first to a balcony, prepared for them at the Angel in Cheapside, to see the show; which, for the great number of livery-men, the full appearance of the militia and artillery company, the rich adornments of the pageants, and the splendour and good order of the whole proceeding, out-did all that had been seen before upon that occasion; and what deserved to be particularly mentioned, says a reverend historian, was a royal regiment of volunteer-horse, made up of the chief citizens, who, being gallantly mounted and richly accoutred, were led by the Earl of Monmouth, now Earl of Peterborough, and attended their Majesties from White-

hall. Among these troopers, who were, for the most part, Dissenters, was Daniel Defoe, at that time a hosier in Freeman's-yard, Cornhill; the same who afterwards was pilloried for writing an ironical invective against the Church; and did after that list in the service of Mr. Robert Harley, and those brethren of his who broke the confederacy, and made a shameful and ruinous peace with France.'[1]

Oldmixon evidently singles out his brother author in this gallant procession with an eye of envy rather than friendship; and the invidious turn given to his politics only means, that all those were *black sheep* who did not go the absurd lengths of Oldmixon and his party in every thing.

The joy and exultation of Defoe on this great and glorious occasion was not of long duration, but was soon turned to gall and bitterness. 'Though that his joy was joy,' yet both friends and foes laboured hard to 'throw such changes of vexation on it, that it might lose all colour.' His admiration of King William was the ruling passion of his life. He was his hero, his deliverer, his friend: he was bound to him by the ties of patriotism, of religion, and of personal obligation. But this ruling passion was also the torment of his breast, because his well-grounded enthusiasm was not seconded by the unanimous public voice, and because the services of the great champion of liberty and of the Protestant cause did not meet with that glow of gratitude and affection in the minds of the people (when their immediate danger was blown over) that they richly merited. Defoe had not only ridden in procession with his Majesty, but he was afterwards closeted with him, and consulted by him on more than one question: so that his self-importance, as well as his sense of truth and justice, was implicated in the attacks which were made on the person and character of his royal patron and benefactor. Nothing can, in our opinion, exceed the good behaviour of William, nor the ill return he received from those he had been sent for, to deliver them from Popish bondage and darkness. Being no longer bowed to the earth by a yoke that they could not lift, and having got a king of their own choosing, they thought they could not exercise their new-acquired liberty and independence better than by using him as ill as possible, and reviling him for the very blessings which he had been the chief means of bestowing on them, and which his presence was absolutely necessary to continue to them. Having seen their hereditary, *passive-obedience* monarch, King James, quietly seated on the other side of the Channel, and being no longer in bodily fear of being executed as rebels, or burnt as heretics, the good people of England began to find a flaw in the title of the new-made monarch,

[1] Oldmixon's History of England, vol. III. p. 36.

because he was not, and did not pretend to be, absolute; and to sacrifice to the *manes* of divine right, by taking every opportunity, and resorting to every artifice to insult his person, to revile his reputation, to wound his feelings, and to cramp and thwart his measures for his own and their common safety. The Tories and high-fliers lamented that the crown was without its most precious jewel and ornament, *hereditary right*; and though they acknowledged the necessity of the case upon which they themselves had acted, yet they thought the time might come when this necessity might cease, and for their lawful King to be brought back again, 'with conditions.' Pulpits, long accustomed to unqualified submission, now echoed the double-tongued distinction of a king *de jure* and a king *de facto*. This party, whose old habits were inimical to the new order of things, but who made a virtue of necessity, tendered their allegiance to the Prince of Orange reluctantly and ungraciously; while the Non-jurors bearded him to his face. The Country Gentlemen, (at that time a formidable party, 'not pierceable by power of any argument,') only felt themselves at a loss from not having the Dissenters and Non-conformists to hunt down as usual. William they regarded as an interloper, who had no rights of his own, and who hindered other people from exercising theirs, in molesting and domineering over their neighbours. What made matters worse, was his being a foreigner; his Dutch origin was one of the things constantly thrown in his teeth, and that staggered the faith and loyalty of many of his well-meaning subjects, who could not comprehend the relation in which they stood to a sovereign of alien descent. The phrase, *True-born Englishman*, became a watchword in the mouths of the male-content party; and at that name, (as often as it was repeated), the Whig and Protestant interest grew pale. It was to meet, and finally quell this charge, that Defoe penned his well-known poem of *The True-born Englishman*—a satire which, if written in doggerel verse, and without the wit or pleasantry of Butler's Hudibras, is a master-piece of good sense and just reflection, and shows a thorough knowledge both of English history and of the English character. It is indeed a complete and unanswerable exposure of the pretence set up to a purer and loftier origin than all the rest of the world, instead of our being a mixed race from all parts of Europe, settling down into one common name and people. Defoe's satire was so just and true, that it drove the cant, to which it was meant to be an antidote, out of fashion; and it was this piece of service that procured the writer the good opinion and notice of King William. It did not, however, equally recommend him to the public. If it silenced the idle and ill-natured clamours of a party, by telling the plain truth,—that truth

was not the more welcome for being plain or effectual. Though this handle was thus taken from malevolence and discontent, the tide of unpopularity had set in too strong from the first arrival of the king, not to continue and increase to the end of his reign; so that at last worn out with rendering the noblest services, and being repaid with the meanest ingratitude, he thought of retiring to Holland, and leaving his English crown of thorns to any one who chose to claim it.

The state of parties, at this period of our history, presents a riddle that has not been solved. It has been referred to the gloom and discontent of the English character; but other countries have of late exhibited the same problem, with the same result. It may be resolved into that propensity in human nature, through which, when it has got what it wants, it requires something else which it cannot have. The English people, at the period in question, wanted a contradiction,—that is, to have James and William on the throne together; but this they could not have, and so they were contented with neither. If they had recalled James, they would have sent him back again. They wanted him back again *with conditions*, and security for his future good behaviour. They wanted his title to the throne without his abuse of power; an absolute sovereign, with a reserve of the privileges of the people; a Popish prince, with a Protestant church; a deliverance from chains without a deliverer; and an escape from tyranny without the stain of resistance to it. They wanted not out of two things one which they could have, but a third, which was impossible; and as they could not have all, they were determined to be pleased with nothing. This greatly annoyed Defoe, who set his face against so absurd a manifestation of the spirit of the times. It embittered his satisfaction in the virtues of the sovereign, and the glories of his reign,—in his exploits abroad,—the moderation and justice of his administration at home; nor was he consoled for the malignity of his prince's enemies or the indifference of his friends, either by writing *Odes* on his battles and victories, or *Elegies* and *Epitaphs* on his death.

He was still less fortunate in following up the dictates of what he thought right, or in what he called 'speaking a word in season,' in the subsequent reign. Queen Anne, who succeeded to the crown on the death of King William, was placed in no very graceful or dutiful position, as keeping her brother from the throne, which she occupied as the next Protestant heir, but to which, in the opinion of many, and perhaps in her own, he had a prior indefeasible right. She had been brought up with bigoted notions of religion; and in proportion as she felt the political ground infirm under her feet, she wished to stand well with the Church. There was, through her whole

reign, therefore, a strong increasing bias to High Church principles. The promise of toleration to the dissenters soon sunk into an *indulgence*, and ended in the threat and the intention of putting in force the severest laws against them, under pretence that the Church was in danger. The Clergy sung the same song as the Queen, adding a burden of their own to it;—breathing nothing in their sermons but suspicion and hatred of the dissenters, reviving and inflaming old animosities, and encouraging their parishioners to proceed even to open violence against the frequenters of conventicles. Their services in bringing about the Revolution were forgotten; and nothing was insisted on but their share in the great Rebellion, and the beheading of Charles I. A university preacher (Sacheverell) talked of 'hoisting the bloody flag' against the dissenters, and treated all those of the Moderate Party and Low Church as false brethren, who did not enlist under the banner. Another proposed shutting up not only the dissenters' Meeting-Houses, but their Academies, and thus taking from them the education of their children. A third was for using gentle violence with the Queen to urge her to severe and salutary measures against Nonconformists; and considered her as under *duresse* in not being allowed to give full scope to the sentiments labouring in her bosom in favour of the Church of England. Defoe marked all this with quick and anxious eye; he saw the storm of persecution gathering, and ready to burst with tenfold vengeance, from its having been so long delayed; he thought it high time to warn his brethren of the impending mischief, and to point out to the government, in a terrible and palpable way, the dangerous and mad career to which the zealots of a party were urging them headlong. 'So should his anticipation prevent their discovery.' He collected all the poisoned missiles and combustible materials he could lay his hands on, and putting them together in one heap, brought out his *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. If it startled his adversaries and threw a blaze of light upon the subject, the explosion chiefly hurt himself. What beyond contradiction proved the truth of the satire was, that it was, at first, taken seriously by many of the opposite side, who thought it a well-timed and spirited Manifesto from a true son of the Church; and several young divines in the country, on perusing it, sent for more copies of it, with high commendations, as the triumph of their views and party. Their rage, when they found out their mistake, was proportionable, and no treatment was bad enough for so vile an incendiary. The book was forthwith prosecuted by authority, as a malignant slander against the Church, and a seditious libel on the government. The author, as before noticed, was sentenced to the pillory, and to a heavy fine,

with imprisonment during the queen's pleasure; which, as already mentioned, was the immediate and ultimate ruin of his affairs and prospects in life. Defoe bore his disgrace and misfortunes with the spirit of a man, and with a sort of grumbling patience peculiar to himself. He wrote on the occasion a *Hymn to the Pillory*, which contains some bad poetry and manly feeling; and indeed his apparent indifference is easily accounted for from a consciousness of the *flagrant* rectitude of his case. Pope has made an ungenerous allusion to the circumstances in the *Dunciad*:—

'See where on high stands unabash'd Defoe!'

Pope's imagination had too much effeminacy to stomach, under any circumstances, this kind of petty, squalid martyrdom; nor had he strength of public principle enough to form to himself the practical antithesis of 'dishonour honourable!' The amiable in private life, the exalted in rank and station, alone fixed his sympathy, and engrossed his admiration. The exquisite compliments with which he has embalmed the memory of some of his illustrious friends, who stand 'condemned to everlasting fame,' are a discredit to his own. His apostrophe to Harley, beginning,

'Oh soul supreme, in each hard instance tried,
Above all pain, all passion, and all pride,'

contrasts strangely with the time-serving, vain, versatile, and unprincipled character of that minister; and Mr. Wilson ought to have written a good book, for he has spoiled the effect of some of the finest lines in the English language. It was a bold step in Pope to put the author of *Robinson Crusoe* into the *Dunciad* at all; Swift also has a fling at him as 'the fellow that was pilloried;' and Gay is equally sceptical and pedantic, as to his possessing more than 'the superficial parts of learning.' We know of no excuse for the illiberality of the literary junto with regard to a man like Defoe, but that he returned the compliment to them; and in fact, if we were to take the character of men of genius from their judgment of each other, we must sometimes come to a very different conclusion from what the world have formed.

That Defoe should have incurred the hatred, and been consigned to the vengeance, of the High-Church party for thus honestly exposing their designs against the Dissenters, is but natural; the wonderful part is, that he equally excited the indignation and reproaches of the Dissenters themselves; who disclaimed his work as a scandalous and inflammatory performance, and called loudly (in concert with their bitterest foes,) for the condign punishment of the author. They almost with one voice, and as if seized with a contagion of folly, cried

shame upon it, as an underhand and designing attempt to make a premature breach between them and the established church; to sow the seeds of groundless jealousy and ill-will; and to make them indirectly participators in, and the sufferers by, a scurrilous attack on the reverence due to religion and authority. Defoe was made the scapegoat of this paltry and cowardly policy, and was given up to the tender mercies of the opposite party without succour or sympathy. This extreme blindness to their own interests can only be explained by the consideration that the Dissenters, as a body, were at this time in a constant state of probation and suffering; they had enough to do with the evils they actually endured, without 'flying to others that they knew not of;' they stood in habitual awe and apprehension of their spiritual lords and masters;—would not be brought to suspect their further designs lest it should provoke them to realise their fears; and as they had not strength nor spirit to avert the blow, did not wish to see till they felt it. The alacrity and prowess of Defoe was a reproach to their backwardness; the truth of his appeal implied a challenge to meet it; and they answered, with the old excuse, 'why troublest thou us before our time?' The Dissenters too, at this period, were men of a formal and limited scope of mind, not much versed in the general march of human affairs; they required literal and positive proof for every thing, as well as for the points of faith on which they held out so manfully; and their obstinacy in maintaining these, and suffering for them, was matched by their timid circumspection and sluggish impracticability with respect to every thing else. Their deserting Defoe, who marched on at the head of the battle,—pushed forward by his keen foresight and natural impatience of wrong,—is not out of character; though equally repugnant to sound policy or true spirit. They fixed a stigma on him, therefore, as a breeder of strife, a false prophet, and a dangerous member of the community; and, what is certainly inexcusable, when, afterwards, his jest was turned to melancholy earnest;—when every thing he had foretold was verified to the very letter, when the whole force of the government was arrayed against them, and Sacheverell in person unfurled 'his bloody flag,' and paraded the streets with a mob at his heels, pulling down their meeting-houses, burning their private dwellings, and making it unsafe for a Dissenter to walk the streets,—they did not take off the stigma they had affixed to the author of *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*; did not allow that he was right and they were wrong, but kept up their unjust and illiberal prejudices, and even aggravated them in some instances, as if to prove that they were well-founded. Bodies of men seldom retract or atone for the injuries they have done to individuals. It will hardly seem credible to the

modern reader, that in pursuance of this old sectarian grudge, and in conformity with the same narrow spirit, some years after this, when Queen Anne, who, from the death of her son, Prince George, had no hope of leaving an heir to the crown, turned her thoughts to the restoration of the Pretender, and when Defoe, in the general alarm and agitation which this uncertainty of the designs of the Court occasioned, endeavoured to ridicule and defeat the project, by pointing out, in his powerful and inimitable way, the incalculable benefits that would ensue from setting aside the Hanoverian succession, and bringing in the right line, one William Benson, (a Dissenter, a stanch friend to the House of Hanover, and the same who had a monument erected to Milton,) in his absurd prejudice against Defoe,—in his conviction that he was a renegado and a Marplot, and in his utter incapacity to conceive the meaning of irony,—actually set on foot a prosecution against the author as in league with the Pretender; wanted to have him accused of high treason, and obstinately persisted in, and returned to the charge; and that it was only through the friendly zeal and interest of Harley, and his representations to the queen, that he was pardoned and released from Newgate, whither he had been committed on the judges' warrant, for writing something in defence of his pamphlet, after its presentation by the Grand Jury, and his being compelled to give bail to appear for trial! 'The force of *dulness* could no farther go.'

Defoe had before this given violent offence to the Dissenters, by *dissenting* from and 'disobliging' them on a number of technical and doubtful points—a difference of which they seemed more tenacious than of the greatest affronts or deadliest injuries. Among others, he had opposed the principles of *occasional conformity*; that is, the liberty practised by some Dissenters, of going to church during their appointment to any public office, as they were prohibited from attending their own places of worship in their official costume. Nothing could be clearer, than that, if it was a point of conscience with these persons not to conform to the service of the established church, their being chosen mayor, sheriff, or alderman, did not give them a dispensation to that purpose. But many of the demure and purse-proud citizens of London, (among whom Mr. William Benson was a leader and a shining light,) resented their not being supposed at liberty to appear at church in their gold chains and robes of office, though contrary to their usual principles of nonconformity;—as children think they have a right to visit fine places in their new clothes on holidays. Their rage against Defoe was at its height, when he had nothing to say against Harley's Tory administration, for bringing in *The Occasional Conformity Bill*, to debar Dissenters of this puerile and contradictory

privilege. It was to the kindness and generosity of Harley, on this as well as on former occasions, in affording our author pecuniary aid, of which he was in the utmost need, (being without means, friends, and in prison,) and in rescuing him from the grasp of his own party, that we owe his silence on political and public questions during the last years of Queen Anne; and a line of conduct that, in the present day, seems wavering and equivocal. His gratitude for private benefits hardly condemned him to withhold his opinions on public matters; but at that time, personal and private ties bore greater sway over general and public duties than is the case at present. We entirely acquit Defoe of dishonest or unworthy motives. He might easily have gone quite over to the other side, if he had been inclined to make a market of himself: but of this he never betrayed the remotest intention, and merely refused to join in the hue and cry against a man who had twice saved him from starving in a dungeon. Be this as it may, Defoe never recovered from the slur thus cast upon his political integrity, and was under a cloud, and discountenanced during the following reign; though the establishment of this very Protestant succession had been the object of the labours of his whole life, and was the wish that lay nearest his heart to his latest breath.

Defoe had, in the former reign, been at various times employed at her majesty's desire, and in her service, particularly in accomplishing the Union with Scotland in 1707. He displayed great activity and zeal in accommodating the differences of all parties; and his *History* of that event has been pronounced by good judges to be a masterpiece. But as to the numerous transactions in which he was concerned, and his various publications and controversies, we must refer the reader to Mr. Wilson, who has furnished ample details and instructive comments. For ourselves, we must 'hold our hands and check our pride,' or we should never have done. Of all Defoe's multifarious effusions, the only one in which there is a want of candour and good faith, or in which he has wilfully blunted and deadened his *moral sense*, is his Defence, or (which is the same thing) his Apology for the Massacre of Glencoe. But King William was his idol, and he could no more see any faults in him than spots in the sun. Our old friend Daniel also tries us hard, when he rails at the poor servants, or 'fine madams,' as he calls them, who get a little better clothes and higher wages when they come up to London, than they had in the country; when he *runs a-muck* at stage-plays, and the triumphs of the mimic scene;—confounding 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, with Lucifer, Prince of Darkness.' But these were the follies and prejudices of the time, aided by a little tincture of vulgarity, and the sourness of sectarian bigotry.

We pass on to his Novels, and are sorry that we must hasten over them. We owe them to the ill odour into which he had fallen as a politician. His fate with his party reminds one a little of the reception which the heroine of the *Heart of Mid-Lothian* met with from her sister, because she would not tell a lie for her; yet both were faithful and true to their cause. Being laid aside by the Whigs, as a suspected person, and not choosing to go over to the other side, he retired to Stoke-Newington, where, as already mentioned, he had an attack of apoplexy, which had nearly proved fatal to him. Recovering, however, and his activity of mind not suffering him to be idle, he turned his thoughts into a new channel, and, as if to change the scene entirely, set about writing Romances. The first work that could come under this title was *The Family Instructor*;—a sort of controversial narrative, in which an argument is held through three volumes, and a feverish interest is worked up to the most tragic height, on 'the abomination' (as it was at that time thought by many people, and among others by Defoe) of letting young people go to the play. The implied horror of dramatic exhibitions, in connexion with the dramatic effect of the work itself, leaves a curious impression. Defoe's polemical talents are brought to bear to very good purpose in this performance, which was in the form of Letters; and it is curious to mark the eagerness with which his pen, after having been taken up for so many years with dry debates and doctrinal points, flies for relief to the details and incidents of private life. His mind was equally tenacious of facts and arguments, and fastened on each, in its turn, with the same strong and unremitting grasp. *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719, was the first of his performances in the acknowledged shape of a romance; and from this time he brought out one or two every year to the end of his life. As it was the first, it was decidedly the best; it gave full scope to his genius; and the subject mastered his prevailing bias to religious controversy, and the depravity of social life, by confining him to the unsophisticated views of nature and the human heart. His other works of fiction have not been read, (in comparison)—and one reason is, that many of them, at least, are hardly fit to be read, whatever may be said to the contrary. We shall go a little into the theory of this.

We do not think a person brought up and trammelled all his life in the strictest notions of religion and morality, and looking at the world, and all that was ordinarily passing in it, as little better than a contamination, is, *a priori*, the properest person to write novels: it is going out of his way—it is 'meddling with the unclean thing.' Extremes meet, and all extremes are bad. According to our author's overstrained Puritanical notions, there were but two choices, God or the Devil—Sinners

and Saints—the Methodist meeting or the Brothel—the school of the press-yard of Newgate, or attendance on the refreshing ministry of some learned and pious dissenting Divine. As the smallest falling off from faith, or grace, or the most trifling peccadillo, was to be reprobated and punished with the utmost severity, no wonder that the worst turn was given to every thing; and that the imagination having once overstepped the formidable line, gave a loose to its habitual nervous dread, by indulging in the blackest and most frightful pictures of the corruptions incident to human nature. It was as well (in the cant phrase) 'to be in for a sheep as a lamb,' as it cost nothing more—the sin might at least be startling and uncommon; and hence we find, in this style of writing, nothing but an alternation of religious horrors and raptures, (though these are generally rare, as being a less tempting bait,) and the grossest scenes of vice and debauchery: we have either saintly, spotless purity, or all is rotten to the core. How else can we account for it, that all Defoe's characters (with one or two exceptions for form's sake) are of the worst and lowest description —the refuse of the prisons and the stews—thieves, prostitutes, vagabonds, and pirates—as if he wanted to make himself amends for the restraint under which he had laboured 'all the fore-end of his time' as a moral and religious character, by acting over every excess of grossness and profligacy by proxy! How else can we comprehend that he should really think there was a salutary moral lesson couched under the history of *Moll Flanders*; or that his romance of *Roxana, or the Fortunate Mistress*, who rolls in wealth and pleasure from one end of the book to the other, and is quit for a little death-bed repentance and a few lip-deep professions of the vanity of wordly joys, showed, in a striking point of view, the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice? It cannot be said, however, that these works have an *immoral* tendency. The author has contrived to neutralise the question; and (as far as in him lay) made vice and virtue equally contemptible or revolting. In going through his pages, we are inclined to vary Mr. Burke's well-known paradox, that 'vice, by losing all its grossness, loses half its evil,' and say that vice, by losing all its refinement, loses all its attraction. We have in them only the pleasure of sinning, and the dread of punishment here or hereafter;—gross sensuality, and whining repentance. The morality is that of the inmates of a house of correction; the piety, that of malefactors in the condemned hole. There is no sentiment, no atmosphere of imagination, no 'purple light' thrown round virtue or vice;—all is either the physical gratification on the one hand, or a selfish calculation of consequences on the other. This is the necessary effect of allowing nothing to the frailty of human nature;—of never strewing

the flowers of fancy in the path of pleasure, but always looking that way with a sort of terror as to forbidden ground: nothing is left of the common and mixed enjoyments and pursuits of human life but the coarsest and criminal part; and we have either a sour, cynical, sordid self-denial, or (in the despair of attaining this) a reckless and unqualified abandonment of all decency and character alike:—it is hard to say which is the most repulsive. Defoe runs equally into extremes in his male characters as in his heroines. *Captain Singleton* is a hardened, brutal desperado, without one redeeming trait, or almost human feeling; and, in spite of what Mr. Lamb says of his lonely musings and agonies of a conscience-stricken repentance, we find nothing of this in the text: the captain is always merry and well if there is any mischief going on; and his only qualm is, after he has retired from his trade of plunder and murder on the high seas, and is afraid of being assassinated for his ill-gotten wealth, and does not know how to dispose of it. Defoe (whatever his intentions may be) is led, by the force of truth and circumstances, to give the Devil his due —he puts no gratuitous remorse into his adventurer's mouth, nor spoils the *keeping* by expressing one relenting pang, any more than his hero would have done in reality. This is, indeed, the excellence of Defoe's representations, that they are perfect *fac-similes* of the characters he chooses to pourtray; but then they are too often the worst specimens he can collect out of the dregs and sink of human nature. *Colonel Jack* is another instance, with more pleasantry, and a common vein of humanity; but still the author is flung into the same walk of flagrant vice and immorality;—as if his mind was haunted by the entire opposition between grace and nature—and as if, out of the sphere of spiritual exercise and devout contemplation, the whole actual world was a necessary tissue of what was worthless and detestable.

We have, we hope, furnished a clue to this seeming contradiction between the character of the author and his works; and must proceed to a conclusion. Of these novels we may, nevertheless, add, for the satisfaction of the inquisitive reader, that *Moll Flanders* is utterly vile and detestable: Mrs. Flanders was evidently born in sin. The best parts are the account of her childhood, which is pretty and affecting; the fluctuation of her feelings between remorse and hardened impenitence in Newgate; and the incident of her leading off the horse from the inn-door, though she had no place to put it in after she had stolen it. This was carrying the love of thieving to an *ideal* pitch, and making it perfectly disinterested and mechanical. *Roxana* is better—soaring a higher flight, instead of grovelling always in the mire of poverty and distress; but she has neither refinement nor a heart; we

are only dazzled with the outward ostentation of jewels, finery, and wealth. The scene where she dances in her Turkish dress before the king, and obtains the name of Roxana, is of the true romantic cast. The best parts of *Colonel Jack* are the early scenes, where there is a spirit of mirth and good fellowship thrown over the homely features of low and vicious life;—as where the hero and his companion are sitting at the three-halfpenny ordinary, and are delighted, even more than with their savoury fare, to hear the waiter cry, 'Coming, gentlemen, coming,' when they call for a cup of small-beer; and we rejoice when we are told as a notable event, that 'about this time the Colonel took upon him to wear a shirt.' The *Memoirs of a Cavalier* are an agreeable mixture of the style of history and fiction. These Memoirs, as is well known, imposed upon Lord Chatham as a true history. In his *History of Apparitions*, Defoe discovers a strong bias to a belief in the marvellous and preternatural; nor is this extraordinary, for, to say nothing of the general superstition of the times, his own impressions of whatever he chose to conceive are so vivid and literal, as almost to confound the distinction between reality and imagination. He could 'call spirits from the vasty deep,' and they 'would come when he did call for them.' We have not room for an enumeration of even half his works of fiction. We give the bust, and must refer to Mr. Wilson for the whole length. After *Robinson Crusoe*, his *History of the Plague* is the finest of all his works. It has an epic grandeur, as well as heart-breaking familiarity, in its style and matter.

Notwithstanding the number and success of his publications, Defoe, we lament to add, had to struggle with pecuniary difficulties, heightened by domestic afflictions. To the last, when on the brink of death, he was on the verge of a jail; and the ingratitude and ill-behaviour of his son in embezzling some property which Defoe had made over for the benefit of his sisters and mother, completed his distress. He was supported in these painful circumstances by the assistance and advice of Mr. Baker, who had married his youngest daughter, Sophia. The subjoined letter gives a melancholy but very striking picture of the state of his feelings at this sad juncture:—

'Dear Mr. Baker,—I have yo^{r} very kind and affecc'onate Letter of the 1st: But not come to my hand till y^{e} 10th; where it had been delay'd I kno' not. As your kind manner, and kinder Thought, from w^{ch} it flows, (for I take all you say to be as I always believed you to be, sincere and Nathaniel like, without Guile) was a particular satisfacc'on to me; so the stop of a Letter, however it happened, deprived me of that cordial too many days, considering how much I stood in need of it, to support a mind sinking under the weight of an

afflicc'on too heavy for my strength, and looking on myself as abandoned of every Comfort, every Friend, and every Relative, except such only as are able to give me no assistance.

'I was sorry you should say at y^e^ beginning of your Letter, you were debarred seeing me. Depend upon my sincerity for this, I am far from debarring you. On y^e^ contrary, it would be a greater comfort to me than any I now enjoy, that I could have yo^r^ agreeable visits w^th^ safety, and could see both you and my dearest Sophia, could it be without giving her y^e^ grief of seeing her father *in tenebris*, and under y^e^ load of insupportable sorrows. I am sorry I must open my griefs so far as to tell her, it is not y^e^ blow I rec^d^ from a wicked, perjur'd, and contemptible enemy, that has broken in upon my spirit, w^ch^ as she well knows, has carryed me on thro' greater disasters than these. But it has been the injustice, unkindness, and, I must say, inhuman dealing of my own son, w^ch^ has both ruined my family, and, in a word, has broken my heart; and as I am at this time under a weight of very heavy illness, w^ch^ I think will be a fever, I take this occasion to vent my grief in y^e^ breasts who I know will make a prudent use of it, and tell you, that nothing but this has conquered, or could conquer me. *Et tu! Brute!* I depended upon him, I trusted him, I gave up my two dear unprovided children into his hands; but he has no compassion, and suffers them and their poor dying mother to beg their bread at his door, and to crave, as if it were an alms, what he is bound under hand and seal, besides the most sacred promises, to supply them with; himself, at y^e^ same time, living in a profusion of plenty. It is too much for me. Excuse my infirmity, I can say no more; my heart is too full. I only ask one thing of you as a dying request. Stand by them when I am gone, and let them not be wrong'd, while he is able to do them right. Stand by them as a brother; and if you have any thing within you owing to my memory, who have bestow'd on you the best gift I had to give, let y^m^ not be injured and trampled on by false pretences, and unnatural reflections. I hope they will want no help but that of comfort and council; but that they will indeed want, being too easie to be manag'd by words and promises.

'It adds to my grief that it is so difficult to me to see you. I am at a distance from Lond^n^ in Kent; nor have I a lodging in London, nor have I been at that place in the Old Bailey, since I wrote you I was removed from it. At present I am weak, having had some fits of a fever that have left me low. But those things much more.

'I have not seen son or daughter, wife or child, many weeks, and kno' not which way to see them. They dare not come by water, and by land here is no coach, and I kno' not what to do.

'It is not possible for me to come to Enfield, unless you could find a retired lodging for me, where I might not be known, and might have the comfort of seeing you both now and then; upon such a circumstance, I could gladly give the days to solitude, to have the comfort of half an hour now and then, with you both, for two or three weeks. But just to come and look at you, and retire immediately, tis a burden too heavy. The parting will be a price beyond the enjoyment.

'I would say, (I hope) with comfort, that 'tis yet well. I am so near my journey's end, and am hastening to the place where y^e^ weary are at rest, and where the wicked cease to trouble; be it that the passage is rough, and the day stormy, by what way soever He please to bring me to the end of it, I desire to finish life with this temper of soul in all cases: *Te Deum Laudamus.*

'I congratulate you on y^e^ occasion of yo^r^ happy advance in y^r^ employment. May all you do be prosperous, and all you meet with pleasant, and may you both escape the tortures and troubles of uneasie life. May you sail y^e^ dangerous voyage of life with *a forcing wind*, and make the port of heaven *without a storm.*

'It adds to my grief that I must never see the pledge of your mutual love, my little grandson. Give him my blessing, and may he be to you both your joy in youth, and your comfort in age, and never add a sigh to your sorrow. But, alas! that is not to be expected. Kiss my dear Sophy once more for me; and if I must see her no more, tell her this is from a father that loved her above all his comforts, to his last breath.—Yo^r^ unhappy, D. F.

'About two miles from Greenwich, Kent,
Tuesday, August 12, 1730.'

'From this scene of sorrow,' says Mr. Wilson, 'we must now hasten to an event, that dropped before it the dark curtain of time. Having received a wound that was incurable, there is too much reason to fear that the anguish arising from it sunk deep in his spirits, and hastened the crisis that, in a few months, brought his troubles to a final close. The time of his death has been variously stated; but it took place upon the 24th of April, 1731, when he was about seventy years of age, having been born in the year 1661. Cibber and others state that he died at his house at Islington; but this is incorrect. The parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, in which he drew his first breath, was also destined to receive his last. This we learn from the parish register, which has been searched for the purpose; and farther informs us, that he went off in a lethargy. He was buried from thence, upon the 26th of April, in Tindall's Burying-ground, now

most known by the name of Bunhill-Fields. The entry in the register, written probably by some ignorant person, who made a strange blunder of his name, is as follows: "1731, April 26. Mr. Dubow. Cripplegate." His wife did not long survive him.'

MR. GODWIN

Vol. II.] [*April* 1830.

We find little of the author of Caleb Williams in the present work, except the name in the title-page. Either we are changed, or Mr. Godwin is changed, since he wrote that masterly performance. We remember the first time of reading it well, though now long ago. In addition to the singularity and surprise occasioned by seeing a romance written by a philosopher and politician, what a quickening of the pulse,—what an interest in the progress of the story,—what an eager curiosity in divining the future,—what an individuality and contrast in the characters,—what an elevation and what a fall was that of Falkland;—how we felt for his blighted hopes, his remorse, and despair, and took part with Caleb Williams as his ordinary and unformed sentiments are brought out, and rendered more and more acute by the force of circumstances, till hurried on by an increasing and incontrollable impulse, he turns upon his proud benefactor and unrelenting persecutor, and in a mortal struggle, overthrows him on the vantage-ground of humanity and justice! There is not a moment's pause in the action or sentiments: the breath is suspended, the faculties wound up to the highest pitch, as we read. Page after page is greedily devoured. There is no laying down the book till we come to the end; and even then the words still ring in our ears, nor do the mental apparitions ever pass away from the eye of memory. Few books have made a greater impression than Caleb Williams on its first appearance. It was read, admired, parodied, dramatised. All parties joined in its praise. Those (not a few) who at the time favoured Mr. Godwin's political principles, hailed it as a new triumph of his powers, and as a proof that the stoicism of the doctrines he inculcated did not arise from any defect of warmth or enthusiasm of feeling, and that his abstract speculations were grounded in, and sanctioned by, an intimate knowledge of, and rare felicity in, developing the actual vicissitudes of human life. On the other hand, his enemies, or those who looked with a mixture of dislike and fear at the system of ethics advanced in the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, were disposed to forgive the author's paradoxes for the truth of imitation with which he had depicted prevailing passions, and were glad to

have something in which they could sympathize with a man of no mean capacity or attainments. At any rate, it was a new and startling event in literary history for a metaphysician to write a popular romance. The thing took, as all displays of unforeseen talent do with the public. Mr. Godwin was thought a man of very powerful and versatile genius; and in him the understanding and the imagination reflected a mutual and dazzling light upon each other. His St. Leon did not lessen the wonder, nor the public admiration of him, or rather 'seemed like another morn risen on mid-noon.' But from that time he has done nothing of superlative merit. He has imitated himself, and not well. He has changed the glittering spear, which always detected truth or novelty, for a leaden foil. We cannot say of his last work (Cloudesley),—'Even in his ashes live his wonted fires.' The story is cast indeed something in the same moulds as Caleb Williams; but they are not filled and running over with molten passion, or with scalding tears. The situations and characters, though forced and extreme, are without effect from the want of juxtaposition and collision. Cloudesley (the elder) is like Caleb Williams, a person of low origin, and rebels against his patron and employer; but he remains a characterless, passive, inefficient agent to the last,—forming his plans and resolutions at a distance,—not whirled from expedient to expedient, nor driven from one sleepless hiding-place to another; and his lordly and conscience-stricken accomplice (Danvers) keeps his state in like manner, brooding over his guilt and remorse in solitude, with scarce an object or effort to vary the round of his reflections,—a lengthened paraphrase of grief. The only dramatic incidents in the course of the narrative are, the sudden metamorphosis of the Florentine Count Camaldoli into the robber St. Elmo, and the unexpected and opportune arrival of Lord Danvers in person, with a coach and four and liveries, at Naples, just in time to save his ill-treated nephew from a violent death. The rest is a well-written essay, or theme, composed as an exercise to gain a mastery of style and topics.

There is, indeed, no falling off in point of style or command of language in the work before us. Cloudesley is better written than Caleb Williams. The expression is everywhere terse, vigorous, elegant:—a polished mirror without a wrinkle. But the spirit of the execution is lost in the inertness of the subject-matter. There is a dearth of invention, a want of character and grouping. There are clouds of reflections without any new occasion to call them forth;—an expanded flow of words without a single pointed remark. A want of acuteness and originality is not a fault that is generally chargeable upon our author's writings. Nor do we lay the blame upon him

now, but upon circumstances. Had Mr. Godwin been bred a monk, and lived in the good old times, he would assuredly either have been burnt as a free-thinker, or have been rewarded with a mitre, for a tenth part of the learning and talent he has displayed. He might have reposed on a rich benefice, and the reputation he had earned, enjoying the *otium cum dignitate*, or at most relieving his official cares by revising successive editions of his former productions, and enshrining them in cases of sandal-wood and crimson velvet in some cloistered hall or princely library. He might then have courted

> ——'retired leisure,
> That in trim gardens takes its pleasure,'—

have seen his peaches ripen in the sun; and, smiling secure on fortune and on fame, have repeated with complacency the motto—*Horas non numero nisi serenas!* But an author by profession knows nothing of all this. He is only 'the iron rod, the torturing hour.' He lies 'stretched upon the rack of restless ecstasy:' he runs the everlasting gauntlet of public opinion. He must write on, and if he had the strength of Hercules and the wit of Mercury, he must in the end write himself down:

> 'And like a gallant horse, fallen in first rank,
> Lies there for pavement to the abject rear,
> O'er-run and trampled on.'

He cannot let well done alone. He cannot take his stand on what he has already achieved, and say, Let it be a durable monument to me and mine, and a covenant between me and the world for ever! He is called upon for perpetual new exertions, and urged forward by ever-craving necessities. The *wolf* must be kept from the door: the *printer's devil* must not go empty-handed away. He makes a second attempt, and though equal perhaps to the first, because it does not excite the same surprise, it falls tame and flat on the public mind. If he pursues the real bent of his genius, he is thought to grow dull and monotonous; or if he varies his style, and tries to cater for the capricious appetite of the town, he either escapes by miracle or breaks down that way, amidst the shout of the multitude and the condolence of friends, to see the idol of the moment pushed from its pedestal, and reduced to its proper level. There is only one living writer who can pass through this ordeal; and if he had barely written half what he has done, his reputation would have been none the less. His inexhaustible facility makes the willing world believe there is not much in it. Still, there is no alternative. Popularity, like one of the Danaides, imposes impossible tasks on her votary,—to pour water

into sieves, to reap the wind. If he does nothing, he is forgotten; if he attempts more than he can perform, he gets laughed at for his pains. He is impelled by circumstances to fresh sacrifices of time, of labour, and of self-respect; parts with well-earned fame for a newspaper puff, and sells his birth-right for a mess of pottage. In the meanwhile, the public wonder why an author writes so badly and so much. With all his efforts, he builds no house, leaves no inheritance, lives from hand to mouth, and, though condemned to daily drudgery for a precarious subsistence, is expected to produce none but works of first-rate genius. No; learning unconsecrated, unincorporated, unendowed, is no match for the importunate demands and thoughtless ingratitude of the reading public.

> ———'O, let not virtue seek
> Remuneration for the thing it was!
> To have done, is to hang,
> Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
> In monumental mockery;—
> That all, with one consent, praise new-born gaudes,
> Though they are made and moulded of things past;
> And give to dust, that is a little gilt,
> More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.'

If we wished to please Mr. Godwin, we should say that his last work was his best; but we cannot do this in justice to him or to ourselves. Its greatest fault is, that (as Mr. Bayes would have declared) there is nothing 'to elevate and surprise' in it. There is a story, to be sure, but you know it all beforehand, just as well as after having read the book. It is like those long straight roads that travellers complain of on the Continent, where you see from one end of your day's journey to the other, and carry the same prospect with you, like a map in your hand, the whole way. Mr. Godwin has laid no ambuscade for the unwary reader—no picturesque group greets the eye as you pass on—no sudden turn at an angle places you on the giddy verge of a precipice. Nevertheless, our author's courage never flags. Mr. Godwin is an eminent rhetorician; and he shows it in this, that he expatiates, discusses, amplifies, with equal fervour, and unabated ingenuity, on the merest accidents of the way-side, or common-places of human life. Thus, for instance, if a youth of eleven or twelve years of age is introduced upon the carpet, the author sets himself to show, with a laudable candour and communicativeness, what the peculiar features of that period of life are, and 'takes an inventory' of all the particulars,—such as sparkling eyes, roses in the cheeks, a smooth forehead, flaxen locks, elasticity of limb, lively animal spirits, and all the flush of hope,—as if he were describing a

novelty, or some *terra incognita*, to the reader. In like manner, when a young man of twenty is confined to a dungeon as belonging to a gang of banditti, and going to be hanged, great pains are taken through three or four pages to convince us, that at that period of life this is no very agreeable prospect; that the feelings of youth are more acute and sanguine than those of age; that, therefore, we are to take a due and proportionate interest in the tender years and blighted hopes of the younger Cloudesley; and that if any means could be found to rescue him from his present perilous situation, it would be a great relief, not only to him, but to all humane and compassionate persons. Every man's strength is his weakness, and turns in some way or other against himself. Mr. Godwin has been so long accustomed to trust to his own powers, and to draw upon his own resources, that he comes at length to imagine that he can build a palace of words upon nothing. When he lavished the colours of style, and the exuberant strength of his fancy, on descriptions like those of the character of Margaret, the wife of St. Leon, or of his musings in the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor, or of his enthusiasm on discovering the philosopher's stone, and being restored to youth and the plenitude of joy by drinking the *Elixir Vitæ*;—or when he recounts the long and lasting despair which succeeded that utter separation from his kind, and that deep solitude which followed him into crowds and cities,—deeper and more appalling than the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor,—we were never weary of being borne along by the golden tide of eloquence, supplied from the true sources of passion and feeling. But when he bestows the same elaboration of phrases, and artificial arrangement of sentences, to set off the most trite and obvious truisms, we confess it has to us a striking effect of the *bathos*. Lest, however, we should be thought to have overcharged or given a false turn to this description, we will enable our readers to judge for themselves, by giving the passage to which we have just alluded, as a specimen of this overstrained and supererogatory style.

—'The condition in which he was now placed could not fail to have a memorable effect on the mind of Julian. Shut up in a solitary dungeon, without exercise or amusement, he had nothing upon which to occupy his thoughts but the image of his own situation. He had hitherto lived, particularly during the last twelve months, in a dream. He grieved most bitterly, most persistingly, for the death of Cloudesley (the elder). He had been instigated by his grief to seek the society of the companions he had left in the Apennines. He did not desire any new connexions; he would have shrunk from the encounter of new faces.

'All this was well. But the case was different, when he under-

stood from the language and manner of those who had him in custody, the only persons he saw, that he would probably barely be taken out of prison to be led to the scaffold. This was a kind of shock, greatly calculated to awaken a man out of a dream. Julian was young, and had seen little of the diversified scenes of human life. Existence is a thing that is regarded in a very different light by the young and the old. The springs of human nature are of a limited sort, and lie in a narrow compass; and when we grow old, our desires are declining, our faculties have lost their sharpness, and we are reasonably contented "to close our eyes and shut out day-light." But to the young it is a very different thing, particularly perhaps at twenty years of age. We are just come into the possession of all our faculties, and begin fully to be aware of our own independence. Every thing is new to us; and the larger half at least of what is new, is also agreeable. Pleasure spreads before us all its allurements; knowledge unrolls its ample page. We have every thing to learn, and every thing to enjoy. Ambition proffers its variegated visions; and we are at a loss on which side to fix our choice. It is easy to dally with death. The young man is like the coquette of the other sex: She has little objection to trifling with a displeasing and superannuated lover, so long as she is satisfied she is not within his clutches.

'But all these considerations sink into nothing when contrasted with the horrible death that was prepared for him. Julian had hitherto been a stranger to adversity and pain. The path of his juvenile years had been smoothed to him by the exemplary cares of Cloudesley and Eudocia. To his own apprehension he was the favourite of fortune. All that he had read of tragic and disastrous in the annals of mankind seemed like a drama, prepared to make him wise by the sorrows of others, without costing him a particle of the bitter price of experience. All that he had encountered of displeasing was when he was the inmate of Borromeo; and this, though felt by him as intolerable, he was aware had been planned in a spirit of kindness. How terrible, therefore, was the reverse that had now fallen upon him! That he, who had never contemplated the slightest mischief to a human creature, whose life had been all kindness, and beneficence, and good-humour, should suddenly be treated as the vilest of criminals, shut up in a dungeon, and destined to the scaffold, was a thought that overturned all his previous conceptions of human society and life. It filled him with wildness and horror; it drove him to frenzy. From time to time he was ready to burst into paroxysm, and dash out his desperate brains against the bars of his prison. To exchange the most beautiful scene that Paradise ever exhibited, for utter desolation and tremendous hurricane, that should

tear up rocks from their foundations, and overwhelm the produce of the earth with rushing and uncontrollable waves, would feebly express the revolution that took place in his mind. He repented that he had ever again sought the society of these alluring but pernicious friends.' —Vol. III. p. 288.

Was so much circumlocution necessary to prove that it is a disagreeable thing to be shut up in a prison, and led out to the gallows? This is the style of the *orator*, where the whole object is to turn a plain moral adage in as many different ways as possible, and not that of the romance-writer, who has, or ought to have, too many rare and surprising adventures on his hands, to stoop to this trifling, snail-paced method. According to the foregoing studied description, it should seem, that for a man to feel shocked at being immured in a gaol, or broke on the wheel, is 'a pass of wit.' When the author has conjured up all the aggravations of the particular case, and compared it to the nicest shade of difference with his former or his future possible history, he then feels satisfied that his hero would like it little better than he does, and inflicts a tardy horror and repentance on him. With submission, this may be the scholastic or rational process for exciting pity and terror; nature takes a shorter *cut*, and jumps at a conclusion without all this formality and cool calculation of grains and scruples in the scale of misfortune.

We have a graver charge yet to bring against Mr. Godwin on the score of style, than that it leads him into useless amplification: from his desire to load and give effect to his descriptions, he runs different characters and feelings into one another. By not stopping short of excess and hyperbole, he loses the line of distinction, and 'o'ersteps the modesty of nature.' All his characters are patterns of vice or virtue. They are carried to extremes,—they are abstractions of woe, miracles of wit and gaiety,—gifted with every grace and accomplishment that can be enumerated in the same page; and they are not only prodigies in themselves, but destined to immortal renown, though we have never heard of their names before. This is not like a veteran in the art, but like the raptures of some boarding-school girl in love with every new face or dress she sees. It is difficult to say which is the most extraordinary genius,—the improvisatori Bernardino Perfetti, or his nephew, Francesco, or young Julian. Mr. Godwin still sees with 'eyes of youth.' Irene is a Greek, the model of beauty and of conjugal faith. Eudocia, her maid, who marries the elder Cloudesley, is a Greek too, and nearly as handsome and as exemplary in her conduct. Again, on the same principle, the account of Irene's devotion to her father and her husband, is by no means clearly discriminated. The spiritual feeling is exaggerated till it is confounded

with the passionate; and the passionate is spiritualized in the same incontinence of tropes and figures, till it loses its distinctive character. Each sentiment, by being over-done, is neutralized into a sort of platonics. It is obvious to remark, that the novel of Cloudesley has no hero, no principal figure. The attention is divided, and wavers between Meadows, who is a candidate for the reader's sympathy through the first half volume, and whose affairs and love adventures at St. Petersburg are huddled up in haste, and broke off in the middle; Lord Danvers, who is the guilty sufferer; Cloudesley, his sullen, dilatory Mentor; and Julian, (the supposed offspring of Cloudesley, but real son of Lord Alton, and nephew of Lord Danvers,) who turns out the fortunate youth of the piece. The story is awkwardly told. Meadows begins it with an account of himself, and a topographical description of the Russian empire, which has nothing to do with the subject; and nearly through the remainder of the work, listens to a speech of Lord Danvers, recounting his own history and that of Julian, which lasts for six hundred pages without interruption or stop. It is the longest parenthesis in a narrative that ever was known. Meadows then emerges from his *incognito* once more, as if he had been hid behind a curtain, and gives the *coup-de-grace* to his own auto-biography, and the lingering sufferings of his patron. The plot is borrowed from a real event that took place concerning a disputed succession in the middle of the last century, and which gave birth not long after to a novel with the title of *Annesley*. We should like to meet with a copy of this work, in order to see how a writer of less genius would get to the end of his task, and carry the reader along with him without the aid of those subtle researches and lofty declamations with which Mr. Godwin has supplied the place of facts and circumstances. The published trial, we will hazard a conjecture, has more 'mark and likelihood' in it. This is the beauty of Sir Walter Scott: he takes a legend or an actual character as he finds it, while other writers think they have not performed their engagements and acquitted themselves with applause, till they have slobbered over the plain face of nature with paint and varnish of their own. They conceive that truth is a plagiarism, and *the thing as it happened* a forgery and imposition on the public. They stand right before their subject, and say, 'Nay, but hear me first!' We know no other merit in the Author of Waverley than that he is never this opaque, obtrusive body, getting in the way and eclipsing the sun of truth and nature, which shines with broad universal light through his different works. If we were to describe the secret of this author's success in three words, we should say, that it consists in the *absence of egotism.*

Mr. Godwin, in his preface, remarks, that as Caleb Williams was intended as a paraphrase of 'Blue Beard,' the present work may be regarded as a paraphrase of the story of the 'Children in the Wood.' *Multum abludit imago.* He has at least contrived to take the sting of simplicity out of it. It is a very adult, self-conscious set of substitutes he has given us for the two children, wandering hand-in-hand, the robin-redbreast, and their leafy bed. The grand eloquence, the epic march of Cloudesley, is beyond the ballad-style. In a word, the fault of this and some other of the author's productions is, that the critical and didactic part overlays the narrative and dramatic part; as we see in some editions of the poets, where there are two lines of original text, and the rest of the page is heavy with the lumber and pedantry of the commentators. The writer does not call characters from the dead, or conjure them from the regions of fancy, to paint their peculiar physiognomy, or tell us their story, so much as (like the anatomist) to dissect and demonstrate on the insertion of the bones, the springs of the muscles, and those understood principles of life and motion which are common to the species. Now, in a novel, we want the individual, and not the *genus*. The tale of Cloudesley is a dissertation on remorse. Besides, this truth of science is often a different thing from the truth of nature, which is modified by a thousand accidents, 'subject to all the skyey influences;'—not a mechanical principle, brooding over and working every thing out of itself. Nothing, therefore, gives so little appearance of a resemblance to reality as this abstract identity and violent continuity of purpose. Not to say that this cutting up and probing of the internal feelings and motives, without a reference to external objects, tends, like the operations of the anatomist, to give a morbid and unwholesome taint to the surrounding atmosphere.

Mr. Godwin's mind is, we conceive, essentially active, and therefore may naturally be expected to wear itself out sooner than those that are passive to external impressions, and receive continual new accessions to their stock of knowledge and acquirement:—

> ——'A fiery soul that working out its way,
> Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
> And o'er-inform'd its tenement of clay.'

That some of this author's latter works are (in our judgment) comparatively feeble, is, therefore, no matter of surprise to us, and still less is it matter of reproach or triumph. We look upon it as a consequence incident to that constitution of mind and operation of the faculties. To quarrel with the author on this account, is to reject

all that class of excellence of which he is the representative, and perhaps stands at the head. A writer who gives us *himself*, cannot do this twenty times following. He gives us the best and most prominent part of himself first; and afterwards 'but the lees and dregs remain.' If a writer takes patterns and *fac-similes* of external objects, he may give us twenty different works, each better than the other, though this is not likely to happen. Such a one makes use of the universe as his *common-place-book*; and there is no end of the quantity or variety. The other sort of genius is his own microcosm, deriving almost all from within; and as this is different from every thing else, and is to be had at no other source, so it soon degenerates into a repetition of itself, and is confined within circumscribed limits. We do not rank ourselves in the number of 'those base plebeians,' as Don Quixote expresses it, 'who cry, *Long life to the conqueror!*' And, so far, the author is better off than the warrior, that, 'after a thousand victories once foiled,' he does not remain in the hands of his enemies,

'And all the rest forgot, for which he toil'd.'

He is not judged of by his last performance, but his best,—that which is seen farthest off, and stands out with time and distance; and in this respect, Mr. Godwin may point to more than one monument of his powers of no mean height and durability. As we do not look upon books as fashions, and think that 'a great man's memory may last more than half a year,' we still look at our author's talents with the same respect as ever—on his industry and perseverance under some discouragements with more; and we shall try to explain as briefly and as impartially as we can, in what the peculiarity of his genius consists, and on what his claim to distinction is founded.

Mr. Godwin, we suspect, regards his *Political Justice* as his great work—his passport to immortality; or perhaps he balances between this and *Caleb Williams*. Now, it is something for a man to have two works of so opposite a kind about which he and his admirers can be at a loss to say, in which he has done best. We never heard his title to originality in either of these performances called in question: yet they are as distinct as to style and subject matter, as if two different persons wrote them. No one in reading the philosophical treatise would suspect the embryo romance: those who personally know Mr. Godwin would as little anticipate either. The man differs from the author, at least as much as the author in this case apparently did from himself. It is as if a magician had produced some mighty feat of his art without warning. He is not deeply learned; nor is he much beholden to a knowledge of the world. He has no passion

but a love of fame; or we may add to this another, the love of truth; for he has never betrayed his cause, or swerved from his principles, to gratify a little temporary vanity. His senses are not acute: but it cannot be denied that he is a man of great capacity, and of uncommon genius. How is this seeming contradiction to be reconciled? Mr. Godwin is by way of distinction and emphasis an author; he is so not only by habit, but by nature, and by the whole turn of his mind. To make a book is with him the prime end and use of creation. His is the *scholastic* character handed down in its integrity to the present day. If he had cultivated a more extensive intercourse with the world, with nature, or even with books, he would not have been what he is—he could not have done what he has done. Mr. Godwin in society is nothing; but shut him up by himself, set him down to write a book,—it is then that the electric spark begins to unfold itself,—to expand, to kindle, to illumine, to melt, or shatter all in its way. With little knowledge of the subject, with little interest in it at first, he turns it slowly in his mind,—one suggestion gives rise to another, — he calls home, arranges, scrutinizes his thoughts; he bends his whole strength to his task; he seizes on some one view more striking than the rest, he holds it with a convulsive grasp,—he will not let it go; and this is the clew that conducts him triumphantly through the labyrinth of doubt and obscurity. Some leading truth, some master-passion, is the secret of his daring and his success, which he winds and turns at his pleasure, like Perseus his winged steed. An idea having once taken root in his mind, grows there like a germ: 'at first no bigger than a mustard-seed, then a great tree overshadowing the whole earth.' The progress of his reflections resembles the circles that spread from a centre when a stone is thrown into the water. Everything is enlarged, heightened, refined. The blow is repeated, and each impression is made more intense than the last. Whatever strengthens the favourite conception is summoned to its aid: whatever weakens or interrupts it is scornfully discarded. All is the effect, not of feeling, not of fancy, not of intuition, but of one sole purpose, and of a determined will operating on a clear and consecutive understanding. His *Caleb Williams* is the illustration of a single passion; his *Political Justice* is the insisting on a single proposition or view of a subject. In both, there is the same pertinacity and unity of design, the same agglomeration of objects round a centre, the same aggrandizement of some one thing at the expense of every other, the same sagacity in discovering what makes for its purpose, and blindness to every thing but that. His genius is not dramatic; but it has something of an heroic cast: he gains new trophies in intellect, as the conqueror overruns new provinces and

kingdoms, by patience and boldness; and he is great because he wills to be so.

We have said that Mr. Godwin has shown great versatility of talent in his different works. The works themselves have considerable monotony; and this must be the case, since they are all bottomed on nearly the same principle of an uniform *keeping* and strict totality of impression. We do not hold with the doctrines or philosophy of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice;* but we should be dishonest to deny that it is an ingenious and splendid—and we may also add, useful piece of sophistical declamation. If Mr. Godwin is not right, he has shown what is wrong in the view of morality he advocates, by carrying it to the utmost extent with unflinching spirit and ability.

Mr. Godwin was the first *whole-length* broacher of the doctrine of *Utility*. He took the whole duty of man—all other passions, affections, rules, weaknesses, oaths, gratitude, promises, friendship, natural piety, patriotism,—infused them in the glowing cauldron of universal benevolence, and ground them into powder under the unsparing weight of the convictions of the individual understanding. The entire and complicated mass and texture of human society and feeling was to pass through the furnace of this new philosophy, and to come out renovated and changed without a trace of its former Gothic ornaments, fantastic disproportions, embossing, or relief. It was as if an angel had descended from another sphere to promulgate a new code of morality; and who, clad in a panoply of light and truth, unconscious alike of the artificial strength and inherent weakness of man's nature,—supposing him to have nothing to do with the flesh, the world, or the Devil,—should lay down a set of laws and principles of action for him, as if he were a pure spirit. But such a mere abstracted intelligence would not require any rules or forms to guide his conduct or prompt his volitions. And this is the effect of Mr. Godwin's book—to absolve a rational and voluntary agent from all ties, but a conformity to the independent dictates and strict obligations of the understanding:—

> 'Within his bosom reigns another lord,
> *Reason*, sole judge and umpire of itself.'

We own that if man were this pure, abstracted essence,—if he had not senses, passions, prejudices,—if custom, will, imagination, example, opinion, were nothing, and reason were *all in all*;—if the author, in a word, could establish as the foundation, what he assumes as the result of his system, namely, the omnipotence of mind over matter, and the triumph of truth over every warped and partial bias

of the heart—then we see no objection to his scheme taking place, and no possibility of any other having ever been substituted for it. But this would imply that the mind's eye can see an object equally well whether it is near or a thousand miles off,—that we can take an interest in the people in the moon, or in ages yet unborn, as if they were our own flesh and blood,—that we can sympathize with a perfect stranger, as with our dearest friend, at a moment's notice,—that habit is not an ingredient in the growth of affection,—that no check need be provided against the strong bias of self-love,—that we can achieve any art or accomplishment by a volition, master all knowledge with a thought; and that in this well-disciplined intuition and faultless transparency of soul, we can take cognizance (without presumption and without mistake) of all causes and consequences,—establish an equal and impartial interest in the chain of created beings,—discard all petty feelings and minor claims,—throw down the obstructions and stumbling-blocks in the way of these grand cosmopolite views of disinterested philanthropy, and hold the balance even between ourselves and the universe. It were 'a consummation devoutly to be wished;' and Mr. Godwin is not to be taxed with blame for having boldly and ardently aspired to it. We meet him on the ground, not of the desirable, but the practicable. It were better that a man were an angel or a god than what he is; but he can neither be one nor the other. Enclosed in the shell of self, he sees a little way beyond himself, and feels what concerns others still more slowly. To require him to attain the highest point of perfection, is to fling him back to grovel in the mire of sensuality and selfishness. He must get on by the use and management of the faculties which God has given him, and not by striking more than one half of these with the dead palsy. To refuse to avail ourselves of mixed motives and imperfect obligations, in a creature like man, whose 'very name is frailty,' and who is a compound of contradictions, is to lose the substance in catching at the shadow. It is as if a man would be enabled to fly by cutting off his legs. If we are not allowed to love our neighbour better than a stranger, that is, if habit and sympathy are to make no part of our affections, the consequence will be, not that we shall love a stranger more, but that we shall love our neighbour less, and care about nobody but ourselves. These partial and personal attachments are 'the scale by which we ascend' to sentiments of general philanthropy. Are we to act upon pure speculation, without knowing the circumstances of the case, or even the parties?—for it would come to that. If we act from a knowledge of these, and bend all our thoughts and efforts to alleviate some immediate distress, are we to take no more interest in it than in a

case of merely possible and contingent suffering? This is to put the known upon a level with the unknown, the real with the imaginary. It is to say that habit, sense, sympathy, are non-entities. It is a contradiction in terms. But if man were such a being as Mr. Godwin supposes, that is, a perfect intelligence, there would be no contradiction in it; for then he would have the same knowledge of whatever was possible, as of his gross and actual experience, and would feel the same interest in it, and act with the same energy and certainty upon a sheer hypothesis, as now upon a *matter-of-fact*. We can look at the clouds, but we cannot stand upon them. Mr. Godwin takes one element of the human mind, the *understanding*, and makes it the whole; and hence he falls into solecisms and extravagances, the more striking and fatal in proportion to his own acuteness of reasoning, and honesty of intention. He has, however, the merit of having been the first to show up the abstract, or *Utilitarian*, system of morality in its fullest extent, whatever may have been pretended to the contrary; and those who wish to study the question, and not to take it for granted, cannot do better than refer to the *first* edition of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice;* for afterwards Mr. Godwin, out of complaisance to the public, qualified, and in some degree neutralized, his own doctrines.

Our author, not contented with his ethical honours, (for no work of the kind could produce a stronger sensation, or gain more converts than this did at the time,) determined to enter upon a new career, and fling him into the *arena* once more; thus challenging public opinion with singular magnanimity and confidence in himself. He did not stand 'shivering on the brink' of his just-acquired reputation, and fear to tempt the perilous stream of popular favour again. The success of Caleb Williams justified the experiment. There was the same hardihood and gallantry of appeal in both. In the former case, the author had screwed himself up to the most rigid logic; in the latter, he gave unbounded scope to the suggestions of fancy. It cannot be denied that Mr. Godwin is, in the pugilistic phrase, an *out-and-outer*. He does not stop till he 'reaches the verge of all we hate:' is it to be wondered if he sometimes falls over? He certainly did not do this in Caleb Williams or St. Leon. Both were eminently successful; and both, as we conceive, treated of subjects congenial to Mr. Godwin's mind. The one, in the character of Falkland, embodies that love of fame and passionate respect for intellectual excellence, which is a cherished inmate of the author's bosom; (the desire of undying renown breathes through every page and line of the story, and sheds its lurid light over the close, as it has been said that the genius of war blazes through the

Iliad;)—in the hero of the other, St. Leon, Mr. Godwin has depicted, as well he might, the feelings and habits of a solitary recluse, placed in new and imaginary situations: but from the philosophical to the romantic visionary, there was perhaps but one step. We give the decided preference to Caleb Williams over St. Leon; but if it is more original and interesting, the other is more imposing and eloquent. In the suffering and dying Falkland, we feel the heart-strings of our human being break; in the other work, we are transported to a state of fabulous existence, but unfolded with ample and gorgeous circumstances. The palm-tree waves over the untrodden path of luxuriant fiction; we tread with tiptoe elevation and throbbing heart the high hill-tops of boundless existence; and the dawn of hope and renovated life makes strange music in our breast, like the strings of Memnon's harp, touched by the morning's sun. After these two works, he fell off; he could not sustain himself at that height by the force of genius alone, and Mr. Godwin has unfortunately no resources but his genius. He has no Edie Ochiltree at his elbow. His *New Man of Feeling* we forget; though we well remember the old one by our Scottish Addison, Mackenzie. Mandeville, which followed, is morbid and disagreeable; it is a description of a man and his ill-humour, carried to a degree of derangement. The reader is left far behind. Mr. Godwin has attempted two plays, neither of which has succeeded, nor could succeed. If a tragedy consisted of a series of soliloquies, nobody could write it better than our author. But the essence of the drama depends on the alternation and conflict of different passions, and Mr. Godwin's *forte* is harping on the same string. He is a reformist, both as it regards the world and himself. If he is told of a fault, he amends it if he can. His *Life of Chaucer* was objected to as too romantic and dashing; and in his late *History of the Commonwealth*, he has gone into an excess the other way. His style creeps, and hitches in dates and authorities. We must not omit his *Lives of Edward and John Phillips*, the nephews of Milton—an interesting contribution to literary history; and his *Observations on Judge Eyre's Charge to the Jury in* 1794,—one of the most acute and seasonable political pamphlets that ever appeared. He some years ago wrote an *Essay on Sepulchres*, which contained an idle project enough, but was enriched with some beautiful reflections on old and new countries, and on the memorials of posthumous fame. It is a singular circumstance that our author should maintain for twenty years, that Mr. Malthus's theory (in opposition to his own) was unanswerable, and then write an answer to it, which did not much mend the matter. It is worth knowing (in order to trace the history and progress of

the intellectual character) that the author of *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams* commenced his career as a dissenting clergyman; and the book-stalls sometimes present a volume of *Sermons* by him, and we believe, an *English Grammar*.

We cannot tell whether Mr. Godwin will have reason to be pleased with our opinion of him; at least, he may depend on our sincerity, and will know what it is.

NOTES

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

HAZLITT was a regular, though not a frequent contributor to *The Edinburgh Review* from 1814 until 1830, the year of his death. How he came to be introduced so early to Jeffrey's notice is not known. Possibly the introduction came through Longman & Co., who had published Hazlitt's *Reply to Malthus* (1807), and who had been the London publishers of the *Review* since its foundation in 1802. Hazlitt at any rate was proud of the connection, and had a high regard for Jeffrey, whom he called 'the prince of critics and the king of men.' See vol. II., *Liber Amoris*, p. 314 and note, and cf. also vol. IV. *The Spirit of the Age*, pp. 310-318. In *The Atlas* for June 21, 1829, there is a short article, 'Mr. Jeffrey's Resignation of the Editorship of *The Edinburgh Review*,' which is not unlike Hazlitt, but cannot be confidently attributed to him.

In the text of the present volume are printed all Hazlitt's contributions to *The Edinburgh Review* as to the authorship of which there is no reasonable doubt. In the following notes two articles are included, Hazlitt's authorship of which, though probable, cannot be regarded as certain. In addition to these, the following have been attributed to him: (1) Wat Tyler and Mr. Southey (1817, vol. XXVIII. p. 151); (2) The History of Painting in Italy (1819, vol. XXXII. p. 320); (3) Byron's *Sardanapalus* (1822, vol. XXXVI. p. 413); and (4) an article or articles on the Scotch Novels. See Ireland's *List of the Writings of William Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt*, p. 75, a letter from Mr. Ireland in *Notes and Queries*, 5th Series, XI. 165, and Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's 'Chronological Catalogue' of Hazlitt's writings published in the *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, vol. I. pp. xxiv-xxx. It is almost certain that Hazlitt wrote none of these reviews, and they have therefore been excluded from the present edition. The first (Wat Tyler and Mr. Southey) is included in Lord Cockburn's list of Jeffrey's contributions to the *Edinburgh* (*Life of Francis Jeffrey*, 1874 ed. p. 407). This list, it must be admitted, is not thoroughly trustworthy, but the internal evidence against Hazlitt's authorship is very strong. It is incredible that Hazlitt could have written a long article like this on such a subject (cf. *Political Essays*, vol. III. pp. 192 *et seq.*) without betraying his identity by a single phrase. The second of these articles, a review of Stendhal's *History of Painting in Italy*, Mr. Ireland attributes to Hazlitt on merely internal evidence. Mr. W. C. Hazlitt does not include it in his Catalogue. That Hazlitt was acquainted with Stendhal and was fond of writing on Art are reasons why he might have *wished* to review the book, but they tell strongly against his having written this particular article, which is very dull indeed, and shows not a single trace of Hazlitt's manner from beginning to end. The review of Byron's *Sardanapalus* has been attributed to Hazlitt on the strength, no doubt, of a letter which he himself wrote to P. G. Patmore on March 30, 1822. In this letter he says, 'My Sardanapalus is to be in [*i.e.* in the *Edinburgh*]. In my judgment Myrrha is most like S. W. [Sarah Walker], only I am not like

Sardanapalus.' See Mr. Le Gallienne's edition of *Liber Amoris* (1894) p. 212. Whatever the explanation may be, the review of *Sardanapalus* which *did* appear in the *Edinburgh* was written by Jeffrey himself and is included in his *Contributions to the Edinburgh Review* (1844), vol. II. p. 333. There is no evidence that Hazlitt wrote any of the numerous reviews of the Scotch Novels. According to Patmore (*My Friends and Acquaintance*, III. 155-157), Hazlitt was anxious to review Bulwer in *The Edinburgh Review*, and proposed the matter, first to Jeffrey, and, on his retirement, to Napier, personally in London. The subject, however, was, in Patmore's phrase, 'interdicted.'

DUNLOP'S HISTORY OF FICTION

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5. *Dunlop's History of Fiction.* John Colin Dunlop's (d. 1842) *The History of Fiction: being a Critical Account of the most celebrated Prose Fictions, from the earliest Greek Romances to the novels of the Present Age*, was published in 3 vols., 1814.

7. Νέλατον ἐς κενεῶνα. *Iliad*, v. 857.
'*Romulus*,' *etc.* Horace, *Epistles*, II. i. 5-6.

8. *Bossu.* René Le Bossu (1631-1680), author of a *Traité du poème épique* (1675), referred to in *Tristram Shandy*, III. 12. Dryden calls him 'the best of modern critics' (Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*).

9. *Bandello.* Matteo Bandello (1480-1562), whose *Tales* appeared in four volumes, 1554-1573.
Ariosto. Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), whose *Orlando Furioso* (from which the 'contrivance' referred to by Hazlitt was borrowed) was published in 1516-1532.

11. *Middleton.* Conyers Middleton (1683-1750). See his *Letter from Rome*, 1729.
Bayes. See the Duke of Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*, Act I. Sc. I.

13. *Quidlibet audendi, etc.* Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 10.

15. *Bell of Antermony.* John Bell (1691-1780), whose *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to various parts of Asia* was published in 1763.

16. *Mr. Cumberland's novels.* Richard Cumberland (1732-1811), author of *The West Indian* (1771), published two novels, *Arundel* (1789) and *Henry* (1795).
Marianne. By Claude Prosper Jolyot de Marivaux (1688-1763), published between 1731 and 1741.

18. *Warburton.* Warburton's argument is summarised by Dunlop (chap. ii.) from *The Divine Legation of Moses.*

19. *Bayes's most expeditious recipe, etc. The Rehearsal*, Act I. Sc. I.

20. *Mr. Southey's translation.* Southey's translation of *Amadis of Gaul* was published in four vols. 1803.
M. de St. Palaye. Jean-Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye (1697-1781), author of *Mémoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie*, 1759-1781.

24. *Mr. Ellis.* Scott's friend, George Ellis (1753-1815) published his *Specimens of early English Metrical Romances* in three vols. in 1805.
D'Urfé. Thomas D'Urfey (1653-1723), the dramatist and song-writer.
Betsy Thoughtless. Eliza Haywood's (1693?-1756) *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, published in 1751. See Dunlop's *History of Fiction*, chap. xiv.

STANDARD NOVELS AND ROMANCES

This is ostensibly a review of Madame D'Arblay's *The Wanderer*, published in 1814. Nearly the whole of it was incorporated by Hazlitt in his Lecture on the

English Novelists. Cf. vol. VIII. pp. 106 *et seq.* and notes. In his Essay 'A Farewell to Essay-Writing,' Hazlitt says that this review was the result of a discussion at Lamb's, 'sharply seasoned and well sustained till midnight.' Though the review cannot be considered as harsh towards Madame D'Arblay, it led to Hazlitt being dropped out of Admiral Burney's whist parties. See Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, chap. xiii. This fact perhaps partly accounts for Hazlitt's contemptuous reference to the Burneys in his Essay 'On the Aristocracy of Letters,' where, after praising Madame D'Arblay, he says, 'The rest have done nothing, that I know of, but keep up the name.' See vol. VI. (*Table Talk*), p. 209.

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25. *Crebillon.* Claude Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1707-1777), son of the dramatist.

The celebrated French philosopher. Hazlitt was perhaps thinking of Diderot's well-known eulogy of Richardson (*Œuvres*, v. 212-227).

39. *The Story of Le Febre.* See *Tristram Shandy*, Book VI. chap. vi. *et seq.*

SISMONDI'S LITERATURE OF THE SOUTH.

Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de Sismondi (1773-1842) published his *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen-Âge* in 16 vols. between 1807 and 1818; his *Littérature du midi de l'Europe* (here reviewed and afterwards—in 1823—translated by Thomas Roscoe) in 4 vols. in 1813; and his *Histoire des Français* in 31 vols., 1821-1844. Roscoe's translation forms two volumes of Bohn's Standard Library. The translations in the present review are presumably by Hazlitt himself.

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45. *Metastasio.* Pietro Antonio Bonaventura Trapassi (1698-1782), poet and librettist.

Alfieri. Vittorio, Count Alfieri (1749-1803), the dramatist and poet.

Goldoni. Carlo Goldoni (1707-1793), the comic dramatist.

46. *Professor Boutterwek.* Friedrich Bouterwek (1765-1828), author of *Geschichte der neuern Poesie und Beredsamkeit* (1801-1819).

Millot's History of the Troubadours. Histoire Littéraire des Troubadours (1774), by Claude François Xavier Millot (1726-1785).

Tiraboschi. Girolamo Tiraboschi (1731-1794), author of *Storia della Letteratura Italiana* (1772-1782).

Velasquez. Louis Joseph Velasquez de Velasco (1722-1772), author of several works on Spanish poetry and antiquities.

'*Rose like an exhalation.*' *Paradise Lost*, I. 711.

56. *Preserved by Cervantes, etc. Don Quixote*, Part I., Book I., chap. vi.

61. *Dante.* Cf. *Lectures on the English Poets*, vol. V. pp. 17, 18, and notes.

62. *That withering inscription.* At the beginning of Canto III. of the *Inferno.*

The Story of Geneura. It is clear from the note that Hazlitt is referring to the story of Francesca of Rimini in Canto V. of the *Inferno.* Paolo and Francesca read together the story of Lancelot and Guinevere.

Note. '*And all that day we read no more!*' *Inferno*, Canto V.

63. '*Because on earth,*' *etc.* Hazlitt is fond of quoting these lines, which, however, do not appear to be Dante's. Possibly the explanation is to be found in a letter from Lamb to Bernard Barton (Feb. 17, 1823), where he says: 'I once quoted two lines from a translation of Dante, which Hazlitt very greatly admired, and quoted in a book, as proof of the stupendous power of that poet; but no such lines are to be found in the translation, which has been searched for the purpose. I must have dreamed them, for I am quite

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certain I did not forge them knowingly. What a misfortune to have a lying memory!'

63. '*I am the tomb,*' *etc.* *Inferno*, Canto XI.
As when Satan is compared, etc. Hazlitt seems to be confusing Dante with Milton. See *Paradise Lost*, IV. 196.
'*Instinct with life.*' Cf. 'Instinct with spirit. *Paradise Lost*, VI. 752.
Count Ugolino. *Inferno*, Canto XXXIII. Lamb shared Hazlitt's dislike of Reynolds's picture. See *Works* (ed. E. V. Lucas), I. 75 and 149. Patmore (*My Friends and Acquaintance*, II. 252) compares Hazlitt with Ugolino.
'*By the sole strength,*' *etc.* See *Paradiso*, Canto I.

65. *The Sonnet of Petrarch.* No. CCLI. See *Sismondi*, chap. X.

68. *The story of the two holiday lovers.* *The Decameron*, 4th Day, Novel VII.

69. *Pulci.* Luigi Pulci (1432-?1484), author of *Il Morgante Maggiore* (1481).
Boyardo. Matteo Maria Boiardo (1434-1494), whose *Orlando Innamorato* was published in 1486. Francesco Berni's (1490?-1536) version appeared in 1541.

71. '*Giace l'alta Cartago.*' *Jerusalem Delivered*, Canto XV. St. 20.
The speech of Satan. *Ibid.* Canto IV.

72. '*I rather envied,*' *etc.* Montaigne, *Essays*, Book II., chap. XII.

73. '*Like the swift Alpine torrent,*' *etc.* From the final chorus of *Il Torrismondo.*

74. *Chaucer and Spenser.* Much of what follows was repeated by Hazlitt in his lecture on Chaucer and Spenser. See vol. V., pp. 19-44, and notes.

75. *Rousseau's description of the Elisée.* *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Partie IV., Lettre XI.

76. *In looking back, etc.* These two concluding paragraphs were lifted into Hazlitt's lecture on Shakspeare and Milton. See vol. V. pp. 44-46, and notes.

SCHLEGEL ON THE DRAMA.

August Wilhelm von Schlegel's (1767-1845) 'Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature' were delivered in Vienna in 1808. Hazlitt reviews the English translation, published in 1815, by John Black (1783-1855), who afterwards became editor of *The Morning Chronicle.*

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79. *The admirable translator.* Schlegel had translated Shakespeare (9 vols. 1797-1810), and Calderon (*Spanish Theatre*, 2 vols., 1803-1809).
Madame de Staël. Schlegel lived for many years at Madame de Staël's house at Coppet.

81. *Florimel.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book III., Canto VII.

82. '*There was magic in the web.*' *Othello*, Act III. Sc. 4.
Schlegel somewhere compares, etc. Lectures XXV.
'*So withered,*' *etc.* *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 3.
'*Metaphysical aid.*' *Ibid.*, Act I. Sc. 5.

83. '*That she moved with grace,*' *etc.* Possibly Hazlitt was thinking of the scene in the *Iliad* (III. 150, *et seq.*), where at the Scaean Gate the Trojan elders see Helen for the first time.
'*Upon her eyelids,*' *etc.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book II., Canto III., St. 25.
'*All plumed,*' *etc.* *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act IV. Sc. 1.
'*For they are old,*' *etc.* *King Lear*, Act II. Sc. 4.

85. '*Antres vast,*' *etc.* *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 3.
Orlando's enchanted sword, etc. In Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso.*

86. '*New-lighted,*' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 4.
'*The evidence of things seen.*' *Hebrews*, XI. 1.

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86. '*Broods*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, I. 21-22.
'*The ignorant present time.*' *Macbeth*, Act. I. Sc. 5.

88. *Jones.* Sir William Jones (1746-1794), the Orientalist.

98. '*Tu y seras, ma fille.*' Racine, *Iphigénie*, Act II. Sc. 3.
'*The dry chips*,' *etc.* Cowley, Ode, *Of Wit.*

100. '*Tries conclusions infinite.*'

Cf. 'She hath pursued conclusions infinite
Of easy ways to die.'

Antony and Cleopatra, Act V. Sc. 2.

106. *The infant Joas.* *Athalie*, Act II. Sc. 9.
The speech of Phædra. *Phèdre*, Act IV. Sc. 6.

107. *Mr. Schlegel speaks highly, etc.* See Lecture XXI. For Hazlitt on Molière cf. vol. VIII. pp. 28-9 (*English Comic Writers*), where much of this passage is repeated.

108. *Extremes meet, etc.* Hazlitt quoted this paragraph in *The Round Table* (vol. I. pp. 97-8).

111. '*Not a jot*,' *etc.* *Othello*, Act III. Sc. 3.
'*Light thickens.*' *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 2.
'*Why stands Macbeth*,' *etc.* *Ibid.*, Act IV. Sc. 1.

116. '*Ethereal mould*,' *etc.* Cf. *Paradise Lost*, II. 139 and V. 285.
'*Stronger Shakespear*,' *etc.* Collins, *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer*, 64.

117. *The scene between Surly and Sir Epicure Mammon.* *The Alchemist*, Act II. Sc. 1.

118. '*A man walking upon stilts*,' *etc.* Lecture XXVIII.

119. '*By a singular vicissitude*,' *etc.* Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*, chap. XXII.

LEIGH HUNT'S 'RIMINI'

The *Edinburgh Review* for June, 1816 (vol. XXVI. pp. 476-491) contained a notice of Leigh Hunt's *The Story of Rimini*. Lord Cockburn includes this review in his List of Lord Jeffrey's articles in the *Edinburgh* (see *Life of Francis Jeffrey*); Mr. W. C. Hazlitt (*Memoirs*, I. pp. XXV. and 225) attributes it to Hazlitt; and Mr. Ireland, in his Bibliography of Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt, marks it as doubtful. The Blackwood set regarded or professed to regard Hazlitt as the author, as appears from a passage in Lockhart's attack on Hunt in the first number (October 1817) of *Blackwood's Magazine*: 'The very culpable manner in which his [Hunt's] chief poem was reviewed in the *Edinburgh Review* (we believe it is no secret, at his own impatient and feverish request, by his partner in the *Round Table*), was matter of concern to more readers than ourselves. . . . Mr. Jeffrey does ill when he delegates his important functions into such hands as those of Mr. Hazlitt.' Lockhart, however, knew nothing about Hunt or Hazlitt, and his 'no secret' (which afforded an opportunity for a hit at Jeffrey) does not throw any light on the question. Hunt denied the insinuation. See *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, I. 225. The review does not read like Hazlitt, but, from a letter which he afterwards addressed to Leigh Hunt, it would seem that at the least he had some hand in it. The letter is dated April 21, 1821 (see *Four Generations of a Literary Family*, I. 133), and contains an account of Hazlitt's grievances against Leigh Hunt. In course of it, he says: 'For instance, I praised you in the *Edinburgh Review*.' There does not seem to be any praise of Hunt to which this passage can refer except this review, which is possibly the result of some rather free handling of Hazlitt's MS. by Jeffrey.

The review is given below. The long extracts from the poem are roughly

indicated by the first and last line, though in a few cases some of the intermediate lines are omitted in the review.

The Story of Rimini, a Poem. By Leigh Hunt. pp. 111. London, Murray, 1816.

'There is a great deal of genuine poetry in this little volume; and poetry, too, of a very peculiar and original character. It reminds us, in many respects, of that pure and glorious style that prevailed among us before French models and French rules of criticism were known in this country, and to which we are delighted to see there is now so general a disposition to recur. Yet its more immediate prototypes, perhaps, are to be looked for rather in Italy than in England: at least, if it be copied from any thing English, it is from something much older than Shakespeare; and it unquestionably bears a still stronger resemblance to Chaucer than to his immediate followers in Italy. The same fresh, lively and artless pictures of external objects,—the some profusion of gorgeous but redundant and needless description,—the same familiarity and even homeliness of diction,—and, above all, the same simplicity and directness in representing actions and passions in colours true to nature, but without any apparent attention to their effect, or any ostentation, or even visible impression as to their moral operation or tendency. The great distinction between the modern poets and their predecessors, is, that the latter painted more from the eye and less from the mind than the former. They described things and actions as they saw them, without expressing, or at any rate without dwelling on the deep-seated emotions from which the objects derived their interest, or the actions their character. The moderns, on the contrary, have brought these most prominently forward, and explained and enlarged upon them perhaps at excessive length. Mr. Hunt, in the piece before us, has followed the antient school; and though he has necessarily gone something beyond the naked notices that would have suited the age of Chaucer, he has kept himself far more to the delineation of visible, physical realities, than any other modern poet on such a subject.

'Though he has chosen, however, to write in this style, and has done so very successfully, we are not by any means of opinion, that he either writes or appears to write it as naturally as those by whom it was first adopted; on the contrary, we think there is a good deal of affectation in his homeliness, directness, and rambling descriptions. He visibly gives himself airs of familiarity, and mixes up flippant, and even cant phrases, with passages that bear, upon the whole, the marks of considerable labour and study. In general, however, he is very successful in his attempts at facility, and has unquestionably produced a little poem of great grace and spirit, and, in many passages and many particulars, of infinite beauty and delicacy.

'In the subject he has selected, he has ventured indeed upon sacred ground; but he has not profaned it. The passage in Dante, on which the story of Rimini is founded, remains unimpaired by the English version, and has even received a new interest from it. The undertaking must be allowed to have been one of great nicety. An imitation of the manner of Dante was an impossibility. That extraordinary author collects all his force into a single blow: His sentiments derive an obscure grandeur from their being only half expressed; and therefore, a detailed narrative of this kind, a description of particular circumstances done upon this ponderous principle, an enumeration of incidents leading to a catastrophe, with all the pith and conclusiveness of the catastrophe itself, would be intolerable. Mr. Hunt has arrived at his end by varying his means; and the effect of his poem coincides with that of the original passage, mainly, because the spirit in which it is written is quite different. With the personages in Dante, all is over before the

reader is introduced to them; their doom is fixed;—and his style is as peremptory and irrevocable as their fate. But the lovers, whose memory the muse of the Italian poet had consecrated in the other world, are here restored to earth, with the graces and the sentiments that became them in their lifetime. Mr. Hunt, in accompanying them to its fatal close, has mingled every tint of many-coloured life in the tissue of their story—blending tears with smiles, the dancing of the spirits with sad forebodings, the intoxication of hope with bitter disappointment, youth with age, life and death together. He has united something of the voluptuous pathos of Boccacio with Ariosto's laughing graces. His court dresses, and gala processions he has borrowed from Watteau. His sunshine and his flowers are his own! He himself has explained the design of his poem in the Preface. [*A long passage from the Preface is quoted.*]

'The poem opens with the following passage of superb description:—

["The sun is up, and 'tis a morn of May," to
"And pilgrims, chanting in the morning sun."]

'Such is the manner in which the business of the day is ushered in. The rest of the first canto is taken up in describing the preparations for receiving the bridegroom, the processions of knights that precede his expected arrival; the dresses, &c.—There is something in all this part of the poem which gives back the sensation of the scene and the occasion;—a glancing eye, a busy ear, great bustle and gaiety, and, where it is required, great grace of description. Perhaps the subject is too long dwelt upon; and there is, occasionally, a repetition of nearly the same images and expressions. The reader may take the following as fair specimens:

["And hark! the approaching trumpets, with a start," to
"The shift, the tossing, and the fiery tramping."

'After all, the future husband does not appear, but his younger brother, Paulo, who comes as his proxy to take the bride to Rimini; and it is to the mistaken impression thus made on her mind that all the subsequent distress is owing. His person, his dress, the gallantry of Paulo's demeanour, are very vividly described, and the effect of his appearance on the surrounding multitude.

["And on a milk-white courser, like the air," to
"These catch the extrinsic and the common eye."]

'The Second Canto gives an account of the bride's journey to Rimini, in the company of her husband's brother, which abounds in picturesque descriptions. Mr. Hunt has here taken occasion to enter somewhat learnedly into the geography of his subject; and describes the road between Ravenna and Rimini, with the accuracy of a topographer, and the liveliness of a poet. There is, however, no impertinent minuteness of detail; but only those circumstances are dwelt upon, which fall in with the general interest of the story, and would be likely to strike forcibly upon the imagination in such an interval of anxiety and suspense. We have only room for the concluding lines.

["Various the trees and passing foliage here," to
"Night and a maiden silence wrap the plains."]

'We have detained our readers longer than we intended, from that which forms the most interesting part of the poem, the Third Canto, of which the subject is the fatal passion between Paulo and Francesca. We shall be ample in our extracts from this part of the poem, because we have no other way of giving an idea of its characteristic qualities. Mr. Hunt, as we have already intimated, does not belong to any of the modern schools of poetry; and therefore we cannot convey our idea

of his manner of writing, by reference to any of the more conspicuous models. His poetry is not like Mr. Wordsworth's, which is metaphysical; nor like Mr. Coleridge's, which is fantastical; nor like Mr. Southey's, which is monastical. But it is something which we have already endeavoured to sketch by its general features, and shall now enable the reader to study in detail in the following extracts.

'The first disappointment of the warm-hearted bride, and the portraits of the rival brothers, are sketched with equal skill and delicacy.

["Enough of this. Yet how shall I disclose," to
"And like a morning beam, wake to him every morrow."]

'Paulo's growing passion for Francesca is described with equal delicacy and insight into the sophistry of the human heart. He is represented as first concealing his attachment from himself; then struggling with it; then yielding to it.

["Till 'twas the food and habit day by day," to
"'Twas but the taste of what was natural."]

'But we hasten on to the principal event and the catastrophe of the poem. The scene of the fatal meeting between the lovers is laid in the gardens of the palace, which are here described with the utmost elegance and beauty.

["So now you walked beside an odorous bed," to
"A summer-house so fine in such a nest of green."]

'Such is the landscape:—now for the figures.

["All the green garden, flower-bed, shade and plot," to
"To ask the good King Arthur for assistance."]

'We cannot give the whole extract of the story,—only she becomes more deeply engaged as she comes to the love scenes.—What follows, we think is very exquisitely written.

["Ready she sat with one hand to turn o'er," to
"Desperate the joy.—That day they read no more."]

'We do not think the execution of the fourth and last Canto quite equal to that of the third: Yet there are passages in it of the greatest beauty; and an air of melancholy breathes from the whole with irresistible softness and effect.

'The feelings of Francesca, arising from the consciousness of her melancholy situation and broken vows, are thus finely represented.

["And oh, the morrow, how it used to rise!" to
"That Heaven would take her, if it pleased, away."]

'From the distress and agitation of her mind, she afterwards betrays the secret of her infidelity to her husband in her sleep. This leads to a rencounter between the two brothers, which is fatal to Paulo, who runs voluntarily upon his brother's sword; and partly from the shock of the news, partly from previous grief preying on her mind and body, Francesca dies the same day. Her death is profoundly affecting, and leaves an impression on the imagination, icy, cold, and monumental. The squire of Paulo is admitted to the side of her sad couch, to tell the dismal story—and repeats, in the Prince's own words, how he had been forced to fight with his brother—

["——And that although," to
"The gentle sufferer was at peace in death."]

'The bodies of the two lovers are sent back, by order of the husband, to Ravenna, to be buried in one tomb. We shall close our extracts with the account of the arrival of this mournful procession, so different in every respect from the former one.

["The days were then at close of autumn—still," to
"Young hearts betrothed used to go there to pray."]

'We have given these extracts at length, that our readers might judge of the story of Rimini, less on our authority, than its own merits; and we have few remarks to add to those which we ventured to make at the beginning. The diction of this little poem is among its chief beauties—and yet its greatest blemishes are faults in diction.—It is very English throughout—but often very affectedly negligent, and so extremely familiar as to be absolutely low and vulgar. What, for example, can be said for such lines as

"She had stout notions on the marrying score," or
"He kept no reckoning with his sweets and sours;—" or
"And better still—in my idea at least," or
"The two divinest things this world has got."

'We see no sort of beauty either in such absurd and unusual phrases as "a clipsome waist,"—"a scattery light," or "flings of sunshine,"—nor any charm in such comparatives as "martialler," or "tastefuller," or "franklier," or in such words as "whisks," and "swaling," and "freaks and snatches," and an hundred others in the same taste. We think the author rather heretical too on the subject of versification—though we have much less objection to his theory than to his practice. But we cannot spare him a line more on the present occasion—and must put off the rest of our admonitions till we meet him again.'

COLERIDGE'S 'CHRISTABEL'

In the *Edinburgh Review* for September, 1816 (vol. XXVII. pp. 58-67), appeared a review of Coleridge's *Christabel*, as to the authorship of which there has been a good deal of discussion. Coleridge himself believed that it was written by Hazlitt. (See *post*, note to p. 155.) Hazlitt never acknowledged the authorship, and there is indeed no external evidence upon the subject. Mr. Dykes Campbell (*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, p. 225, note 1) regards the ascription of the review to Hazlitt as being 'probably, though not certainly, correct.' Neither Mr. Ireland nor Mr. W. C. Hazlitt ascribes it to Hazlitt. Quite recently the question of Hazlitt's authorship, determined one way or the other by a consideration of the internal evidence, has been the subject of a controversy in *Notes and Queries* (9th Series, x. 388, 429: XI. 170, 269), to which reference should be made. Mr. Andrew Lang in his *Life of J. G. Lockhart* (vol. I. pp. 139-142) refers to the review at some length as a kind of set-off against Lockhart's early indiscretions in *Blackwood*. Without discussing the authorship of the review, he is indignant with Jeffrey for having admitted it into the *Edinburgh*. The present editors are disposed to think that the review is substantially the work of Hazlitt, though, as in the case of the review of *Rimini*, it may be conjectured that Jeffrey used his editorial pen pretty freely. Since absolute certainty is not at present attainable, the review, instead of being printed in the text, is given below.

Christabel: Kubla Khan, a Vision. The Pains of Sleep. By S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq. London. Murray, 1816.

'The advertisement by which this work was announced to the publick, carried in its front a recommendation from Lord Byron,—who, it seems, has somewhere

praised Christabel, "as a wild and singularly original and beautiful poem." Great as the noble bard's merits undoubtedly are in poetry, some of his latest *publications* dispose us to distrust his authority, where the question is what ought to meet the public eye; and the works before us afford an additional proof, that his judgment on such matters is not absolutely to be relied on. Moreover, we are a little inclined to doubt the value of the praise which one poet lends another. It seems now-a-days to be the practice of that once irritable race to laud each other without bounds; and one can hardly avoid suspecting, that what is thus lavishly advanced may be laid out with a view to being repaid with interest. Mr. Coleridge, however, must be judged by his own merits.

'It is remarked, by the writers upon the Bathos, that the true *profound* is surely known by one quality—its being wholly bottomless; insomuch, that when you think you have attained its utmost depth in the work of some of its great masters, another, or peradventure the same, astonishes you, immediately after, by a plunge so much more vigorous, as to outdo all his former outdoings. So it seems to be with the new school, or, as they may be termed, the wild or lawless poets. After we had been admiring their extravagance for many years, and marvelling at the ease and rapidity with which one exceeded another in the unmeaning or infantine, until not an idea was left in the rhyme—or in the insane, until we had reached something that seemed the untamed effusion of an author whose thoughts were rather more free than his actions—forth steps Mr. Coleridge, like a giant refreshed with sleep, and as if to redeem his character after so long a silence, ("his poetic powers having been, he says, from 1808 till very lately, in a state of suspended animation," p. v.) and breaks out in these precise words—

"'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awaken'd the crowing cock;
Tu—whit!——Tu—whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.
Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She makes answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, moonshine or shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud:
Some say she sees my lady's shroud.
Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark." Pp. 3, 4.

'It is probable that Lord Byron may have had this passage in his eye, when he called the poem "wild" and "original"; but how he discovered it to be "beautiful," is not quite so easy for us to imagine.

'Much of the art of the wild writers consists in sudden transitions—opening eagerly upon some topic, and then flying from it immediately. This indeed is known to the medical men, who not unfrequently have the care of them, as an unerring symptom. Accordingly, here we take leave of the Mastiff Bitch, and lose sight of her entirely, upon the entrance of another personage of a higher degree,

"The lovely Lady Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well"—

And who, it seems, has been rambling about all night, having, the night before, had dreams about her lover, which "made her moan and *leap*." While kneeling,

in the course of her rambles, at an old oak, she hears a noise on the other side of the stump, and going round, finds, to her great surprize, another fair damsel in white silk, but with her dress and hair in some disorder; at the mention of whom, the poet takes fright, not, as might be imagined, because of her disorder, but on account of her beauty and her fair attire—

"I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!"

Christabel naturally asks who she is, and is answered, at some length, that her name is Geraldine; that she was, on the morning before, seized by five warriors, who tied her on a white horse, and drove her on, they themselves following, also on white horses; and that they had rode all night. Her narrative now gets to be a little contradictory, which gives rise to unpleasant suspicions. She protests vehemently, and with oaths, that she has no idea who the men were; only that one of them, the tallest of the five, took her and placed her under the tree, and that they all went away, she knew not whither; but how long she had remained there she cannot tell—

"Nor do I know how long it is,
For I have lain in fits, I *wis*;"

—although she had previously kept a pretty exact account of the time. The two ladies then go home together, after this satisfactory explanation, which appears to have conveyed to the intelligent mind of Lady C. every requisite information. They arrive at the castle, and pass the night in the same bed-room; not to disturb Sir Leoline, who, it seems, was poorly at the time, and, of course, must have been called up to speak to the chambermaids, and have the sheets aired, if Lady G. had had a room to herself. They do not get to their bed, however, in the poem, quite so easily as we have carried them. They first cross the moat, and Lady C. "took the key that fitted well," and opened a little door, "all in the middle of the gate." Lady G. then sinks down "belike through pain"; but it should seem more probably from laziness; for her fair companion having lifted her up, and carried her a little way, she then walks on "as she were not in pain." Then they cross the court—but we must give this in the poet's words, for he seems so pleased with them, that he inserts them twice over in the space of ten lines—

"So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court—right glad they were."

'Lady C. is desirous of a little conversation on the way, but Lady G. will not indulge her Ladyship, saying, she is too much tired to speak. We now meet our old friend, the mastiff bitch, who is much too important a person to be slightly passed by—

"Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?"

'Whatever it may be that ails the bitch, the ladies pass forward, and take off their shoes, and tread softly all the way up stairs, as Christabel observes that her father is a bad sleeper. At last, however, they do arrive at the bed-room, and

comfort themselves with a dram of some home-made liquor, which proves to be very old; for it was made by Lady C.'s mother; and when her new friend asks if she thinks the old lady will take her part, she answers, that this is out of the question, in as much as she happened to die in childbed of her. The mention of the old lady, however, gives occasion to the following pathetic couplet.—Christabel says,

"O mother dear, that thou wert here!
I would, said Geraldine, she were!"

'A very mysterious conversation next takes place between Lady Geraldine and the old gentlewoman's ghost, which proving extremely fatiguing to her, she again has recourse to the bottle—and with excellent effect, as appears by these lines.

"Again the wild-flower wine she drank;
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty Lady stood upright:
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a Lady of a far countrée."

—From which, we may gather among other points, the exceeding great beauty of all women who live in a distant place, no matter where. The effects of the cordial speedily begin to appear; as no one, we imagine, will doubt, that to its influence must be ascribed the following speech—

"And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them—and for their sake
And for the good which me befel,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well."

'Before going to bed, Lady G. kneels to pray, and desires her friend to undress, and lie down; which she does "in her loveliness"; but being curious, she leans "on her elbow," and looks towards the fair devotee,—where she sees something which the poet does not think fit to tell us very explicitly.

"Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side——
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
And she is to sleep by Christabel."

'She soon rises, however, from her knees; and as it was not a double-bedded room, she turns in to Lady Christabel, taking only "two paces and a stride." She then clasps her tight in her arms, and mutters a very dark spell, which we apprehend the poet manufactured by shaking words together at random; for it is impossible to fancy that he can annex any meaning whatever to it. This is the end of it.

"But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air."

'The consequence of this incantation is, that Lady Christabel has a strange dream—and when she awakes, her first exclamation is, "Sure I have sinn'd"—"Now heaven be praised if all be well!" Being still perplexed with the remembrance of her "too lively" dream—she then dresses herself, and modestly prays to be forgiven for "her sins unknown." The two companions now go to the Baron's parlour, and Geraldine tells her story to him. This, however, the poet judiciously leaves out, and only signifies that the Baron recognized in her the daughter of his old friend Sir Roland, with whom he had had a deadly quarrel. Now, however, he despatches his tame poet, or laureate, called Bard Bracy, to invite him and his family over, promising to forgive every thing, and even make an apology for what had passed. To understand what follows, we own, surpasses our comprehension. Mr. Bracy, the poet, recounts a strange dream he has just had, of a dove being almost strangled by a snake; whereupon the Lady Geraldine falls a hissing, and her eyes grow small, like a serpent's,—or at least so they seem to her friend; who begs her father to "send away that woman." Upon this the Baron falls into a passion, as if he had discovered that his daughter had been seduced; at least, we can understand him in no other sense, though no hint of such a kind is given; but, on the contrary, she is painted to the last moment as full of innocence and purity.—Nevertheless,

> "His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
> His cheeks they quiver'd, his eyes were wild,
> Dishonour'd thus in his old age;
> Dishonour'd by his only child;
> And all his hospitality
> To th' insulted daughter of his friend
> By more than woman's jealousy,
> Brought thus to a disgraceful end——"

'Nothing further is said to explain the mystery; but there follows incontinently, what is termed "*The conclusion of Part the Second.*" And as we are pretty confident that Mr. Coleridge holds this passage in the highest estimation; that he prizes it more than any other part of "that wild, and singularly original and beautiful poem Christabel," excepting always the two passages touching the "toothless mastiff Bitch;" we shall extract it for the amazement of our readers—premising our own frank avowal that we are wholly unable to divine the meaning of any portion of it.

> "A little child, a limber elf,
> Singing, dancing to itself,
> A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
> That always finds and never seeks;
> Makes such a vision to the sight
> As fills a father's eyes with light;
> And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
> Upon his heart, that he at last
> Must needs express his love's excess
> With words of unmeant bitterness.
> Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
> Thoughts so all unlike each other;
> To mutter and mock a broken charm,
> To dally with wrong that does no harm.
> Perhaps 'tis tender too, and pretty,
> At each wild word to feel within
> A sweet recoil of love and pity.

And what if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true !)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it 's most used to do."

'Here endeth the Second Part, and, in truth, the "singular" poem itself; for the author has not yet written, or, as he phrases it, "embodied in verse," the "three parts yet to come;"—though he trusts he shall be able to do so "in the course of the present year."

'One word as to the metre of Christabel, or, as Mr. Coleridge terms it, "*the* Christabel"—happily enough; for indeed we doubt if the peculiar force of the definite article was ever more strongly exemplified. He says, that though the reader may fancy there prevails a great *irregularity* in the metre, some lines being of four, others of twelve syllables, yet in reality it is quite regular; only that it is "founded on a new principle, namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables." We say nothing of the monstrous assurance of any man coming forward coolly at this time of day, and telling the readers of English poetry, whose ear has been tuned to the lays of Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, that he makes his metre "on a new principle!" but we utterly deny the truth of the assertion, and defy him to show us *any* principle upon which his lines can be conceived to tally. We give two or three specimens, to confound at once this miserable piece of coxcombry and shuffling. Let our "wild, and singularly original and beautiful" author, show us how these lines agree either in number of accents or of feet.

"Ah wel-a-day!"—
"For this is alone in"—
"And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity"—
"I pray you drink this cordial wine"—
"Sir Leoline"—
"And found a bright lady surpassingly fair"—
"Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !"

'*Kubla Khan* is given to the public, it seems, "at the request of a poet of great and deserved celebrity;"—but whether Lord Byron the praiser of "the Christabel," or the Laureate, the praiser of Princes, we are not informed. As far as Mr. Coleridge's "own opinions are concerned," it is published, "not upon the ground of any *poetic* merits," but "as a PSYCHOLOGICAL CURIOSITY!" In these opinions of the candid author, we entirely concur; but for this reason we hardly think it was necessary to give the minute detail which the Preface contains, of the circumstances attending its composition. Had the question regarded "*Paradise Lost*," or "*Dryden's Ode*," we could not have had a more particular account of the circumstances in which it was composed. It was in the year 1797, and in the summer season. Mr. Coleridge was in bad health;—the particular disease is not given; but the careful reader will form his own conjectures. He had retired very prudently to a lonely farm-house; and whoever would see the place which gave birth to the "psychological curiosity," may find his way thither without a guide; for it is situated on the confines of Somerset and Devonshire, and on the Exmoor part of the boundary; and it is, moreover, between Porlock and Linton. In that farm-house, he had a slight indisposition, and had taken an anodyne, which threw him into a deep sleep in his chair, (whether after dinner or not he omits to state), "at the moment that he was reading a sentence in Purchas's Pilgrims," relative to a palace of Kubla Khan. The effects of the anodyne, and the sentence together,

were prodigious : They produced the "curiosity" now before us ; for, during his three-hours sleep, Mr. Coleridge "has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines." On awaking, he "instantly and eagerly" wrote down the verses here published ; when he was (he says "*unfortunately*") called out by a "person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour ;" and when he returned, the vision was gone. The lines here given smell strongly, it must be owned, of the anodyne ; and, but that an under dose of a sedative produces contrary effects, we should inevitably have been lulled by them into forgetfulness of all things. Perhaps a dozen more such lines as the following would reduce the most irritable of critics to a state of inaction.

"A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid
And on her dulcimer she play'd,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread :
For he on honey-dew hath fed." &c. &c.

'There is a good deal more altogether as exquisite—and in particular a fine description of a wood, "ancient as the hills ;" and "folding sunny spots of *greenery*!" But we suppose this specimen will be sufficient.

'Persons in this poet's unhappy condition, generally feel the want of sleep as the worst of their evils ; but there are instances, too, in the history of the disease, of sleep being attended with new agony, as if the waking thoughts, how wild and turbulent soever, had still been under some slight restraint, which sleep instantly removed. Mr. Coleridge appears to have experienced this symptom, if we may judge from the title of his third poem, "*The Pains of Sleep* ;" and, in truth, from its composition—which is mere raving, without any thing more affecting than a number of incoherent words, expressive of extravagance and incongruity.—We need give no specimen of it.

'Upon the whole, we look upon this publication as one of the most notable pieces of impertinence of which the press has lately been guilty ; and one of the boldest experiments that has yet been made on the patience or understanding of the public. It is impossible, however, to dismiss it, without a remark or two. The other productions of the Lake School have generally exhibited talents thrown away upon subjects so mean, that no power of genius could ennoble them ; or perverted and rendered useless by a false theory of poetical composition. But even in the worst of them, if we except the White Doe of Mr. Wordsworth and some of the laureate odes, there were always some gleams of feeling or of fancy. But the thing now before us, is utterly destitute of value. It exhibits from beginning to end not a ray of genius ; and we defy any man to point out a passage of poetical merit in any of the three pieces which it contains, except, perhaps, the following lines

in p. 32, and even these are not very brilliant; nor is the leading thought original—

> "Alas! they had been friends in youth;
> But whispering tongues can poison truth;
> And constancy lives in realms above;
> And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
> And to be wroth with one we love,
> Doth work like madness in the brain."

'With this one exception, there is literally not one couplet in the publication before us which would be reckoned poetry, or even sense, were it found in the corner of a newspaper or upon the window of an inn. Must we then be doomed to hear such a mixture of raving and driv'ling, extolled as the work of a "*wild and original*" genius, simply because Mr. Coleridge has now and then written fine verses, and a brother poet chooses, in his milder mood, to laud him from courtesy or from interest? And are such panegyrics to be echoed by the mean tools of a political faction, because they relate to one whose daily prose is understood to be dedicated to the support of all that courtiers think should be supported? If it be true that the anthor has thus earned the patronage of those liberal dispensers of bounty, we can have no objection that they should give him proper proofs of their gratitude; but we cannot help wishing, for his sake, as well as our own, that they would pay in solid pudding instead of empty praise; and adhere, at least in this instance, to the good old system of rewarding their champions with places and pensions, instead of puffing their bad poetry, and endeavouring to cram their nonsense down the throats of all the loyal and well affected.'

COLERIDGE'S LAY SERMON

The authorship of this review has also been the subject of controversy. See the authorities cited on p. 411. Mr. Dykes Campbell, in the note there quoted, says that, as in the case of *Christabel*, the ascription of the review to Hazlitt is 'probably, though not certainly correct.' The editors regarded the internal evidence of Hazlitt's authorship as so overwhelmingly strong, especially after a comparison of the article with Hazlitt's review of the same work in *The Examiner* (see *Political Essays*, III. 143-152), that they decided to include it in the text. It has not been thought necessary to give references to all Hazlitt's quotations from the *Lay Sermon*. References, when they are given, are to the edition in Bohn's Standard Library.

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120. '*Fancies and Good-nights.*' *Henry IV.*, Part II., Act III. Sc. 2.
Odd ends of verse, etc. Hudibras, I. iii. 1011-2.
'*Chase his fancy's rolling speed.*' Cf. *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, 29.

121. '*Babbles of green fields.*' *Henry V.*, Act II. Sc. 3.
'*Alarmists by trade.*' *A Lay Sermon*, p. 309.
'*A gentle Husher,*' *etc. The Faerie Queene*, Book I. Canto IV. Stanza 13.
Joanna Southcote. Joanna Southcott (1750-1814), the fanatic and impostor, whose prophesies had recently caused a good deal of excitement.

122. '*Thick-coming fancies.*' *Macbeth*, Act V. Sc. 3.

123. *The* '*Friend.*' Published in numbers at irregular intervals between June 1809 and March 1810. Coleridge published a recast—'a complete Rifacimento'—of *The Friend* in 1818.
'*Like the swan's down feather,*' *etc. Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. Sc. 2.

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124. '*They are not sought for*,' *etc.* These words are quoted by Coleridge from *Ecclesiasticus*, xxxviii. 33-34. See *A Lay Sermon*, 308-309.

126. '*Twice ten degrees*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, x. 669-670.
'*With jealous leer malign*.' *Ibid.*, iv. 503.

127. '*Fraught with potential infidelity*.' *A Lay Sermon*, p. 329.

131. *The Watchman.* *The Watchman* ran from March to May, 1796. Coleridge gives an account of his tour to procure subscribers. See *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. x. The *Conciones ad Populum*, originally published in 1795, were reprinted in *Essays on his own Times* (1850).
One of Goldsmith's Essays. See *A Lay Sermon*, p. 319 note.
As Gulliver did, etc. See *A Voyage to Brobdingnag*, Chap. v.

132. '*As Alps o'er Alps arise*.' Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, II. 232.

134. '*High enthroned*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, III. 58.

135. '*It is by means*,' *etc.* See Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I. Chap. IV. 5, 15.

COLERIDGE'S LITERARY LIFE

This review, though claimed for Jeffrey by Lord Cockburn, and marked doubtful by Mr. Ireland, is certainly Hazlitt's. Nearly the whole of the long passage on Burke (pp. 150-154 of the present volume), after doing duty in *The Champion* (Oct. 5, 1817), was published by Hazlitt in *Political Essays* as the first of two 'Characters of Mr. Burke' which appeared in that volume. See vol. III. pp. 250-253.

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135. '*It will be found*,' *etc.* Chap. I.
'*At school*,' *etc.* *Ibid.*

138. *Bowles's Sonnets.* William Lisle Bowles's (1762-1850) famous *Fourteen Sonnets written chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Journey* appeared anonymously in 1789. More sonnets were added in later editions. The sonnets of Thomas Warton (1728-1790) are frequently quoted by Hazlitt, and were eulogised by him in his *Lectures on the English Poets* (see vol. V. pp. 120-1). See Chap. I. of *Biographia Literaria* for Coleridge's praise of Bowles.

138. *Jacob Behmen.* Jakob Boehme (1575-1624), the mystic.
The Morning Post. Coleridge's contributions to *The Morning Post* (chiefly during 1800) were reprinted in *Essays on his own Times* (1850).

139. '*It is not, however*,' *etc.* Note at the end of Chap. III.
The Cannings, the Giffords, and the Freres. William Gifford (1756-1826) was the editor of the *Anti-Jacobin* (1797-8), and George Canning (1770-1827) and *John Hookham Frere* (1769-1846) were the chief contributors. See an article in *The Athenæum* for May 31, 1890, on 'Coleridge and *The Anti-Jacobin*.'

140. '*Publicly*,' *etc.* *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. III.

142. '*Full of wise saws*,' *etc.* *As You Like It*, Act II. Sc. 7.
'*It has been hinted*,' *etc.* *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. IV.

143. *Mr. C. thinks fit, etc.* Chap. V.

144. *A series of citations.* Hazlitt probably refers to an article in *The Examiner* for March 31, 1816, which consists to a large extent of quotations from Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and which is referred to in a later volume of the present edition; but he was never tired of proclaiming the greatness and originality of Hobbes. Cf. the essay or lecture 'On the writings of Hobbes,' published in *Literary Remains*.

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145. '*Sound book-learnedness.*' *A Lay Sermon* (Bohn), p. 327.
'*Wander down,*' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, XI. 282-284.
'*Towards the close,*' *etc.* Chap. X.

150. '*As our very sign-boards,*' *etc.* *Ibid.*
'*Let the scholar,*' *etc.* *Ibid.*
It is not without reluctance, etc. The greater part of this character of Burke, down to the foot of p. 154, was repeated in *Political Essays*. See vol. III. pp. 250 *et seq.*, and notes.

155. *Any account of it at all.* At this point in *The Edinburgh Review* a long note, signed F. J., is appended, in which Jeffrey replies to what he describes as 'averments of a personal and injurious nature' against the *Edinburgh Review*. A great part of the note relates to Coleridge's attack on Jeffrey in Chap. III. of the *Biographia Literaria* (see Bohn's edition, p. 25 note), but part of it concerns Hazlitt. Coleridge had said (Chap. XXIV.): 'In the *Edinburgh Review* it [*Christabel*] was assailed with a malignity and a personal hatred that ought to have injured only the work in which such a tirade was suffered to appear: and this review was generally attributed (whether rightly or no I know not) to a man, who both in my presence and in my absence has repeatedly pronounced it the finest poem in the language.' Jeffrey refers to this passage, and states that when he visited Coleridge at Keswick, there was some talk about the poem. 'We spoke,' he says, 'of *Christabel*, and I advised him to publish it; but I did not say it was either the finest poem of the kind, or a fine poem at all; and I am sure of this, for the best of all reasons, that at this time, and indeed till after it was published, I never saw or heard more than four or five lines of it, which my friend Mr. Scott once repeated to me. That eminent person, indeed, spoke favourably of it; and I rather think I told Mr. C. that I had heard him say, that it was to it he was indebted for the first idea of that romantic narrative in irregular verse, which he afterwards exemplified in his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and other works. In these circumstances, I felt a natural curiosity to see this great original; and I can sincerely say, that no admirer of Mr. C. could be more disappointed or astonished than I was, when it did make its appearance. I did not review it.' With regard to *A Lay Sermon*, Coleridge had said (*Biographia Literaria*, chap. XXIV.): 'A long delay occurred between its first annunciation and its appearance; it was reviewed, therefore, by anticipation with a malignity so avowedly and exclusively personal as is, I believe, unprecedented even in the present contempt of all common humanity that disgraces and endangers the liberty of the press. After its appearance, the author of this lampoon was chosen to review it in the *Edinburgh Review*: and under the single condition, that he should have written what he himself really thought, and have criticised the work as he would have done had its author been indifferent to him, I should have chosen that man myself, both from the vigour and the originality of his mind, and from his particular acuteness in speculative reasoning, before all others. I remembered Catullus's lines [lxxiii.]:

> "Desine de quoquam quicquam bene velle mereri,
> Aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium.
> Omnia sunt ingrata: nihil fecisse benigne est:
> Immo, etiam taedet, taedet obestque magis.
> Ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbius urget
> Quam modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit."

But I can truly say, that the grief with which I read this rhapsody of

predetermined insult had the rhapsodist himself for its whole and sole object: and that the indignant contempt which it excited in me, was as exclusively confined to his employer and suborner.' Coleridge here refers to the first of the two reviews of *A Lay Sermon*, contributed by Hazlitt to *The Examiner* in 1816. See *Political Essays*, vol. III. pp. 138-142. Jeffrey's reply is as follows: 'As to the review of the *Lay Sermon*, I have only to say, in one word, that I never employed or suborned any body to abuse or extol it or any other publication. I do not so much as know or conjecture what Mr. C. alludes to as a malignant lampoon or review by anticipation, which he says had previously appeared somewhere else. I never saw nor heard of any such publication. Nay, I was not even aware of the existence of the *Lay Sermon* itself, when a review of it was offered me by a gentleman in whose judgment and talents I had great confidence, but whom I certainly never suspected, and do not suspect at this moment, of having any personal or partial feelings of any kind towards its author. I therefore accepted his offer, and printed his review, with some retrenchments and verbal alterations, just as I was setting off, in a great hurry, for London, on professional business, in January last.'

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156. '*The dew of Castalie.*' Cf. 'With verses, dipt in deaw of Castalie.' Spenser, *The Ruines of Time*, l. 431.
'*Sky-tinctured.*' *Paradise Lost*, v. 285.
'*Thoughts that voluntary move*,' *etc. Ibid.*, III. 37-38.

157. '*The golden cadences of poesy.*' *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV. Sc. 2.
'*Poets* [lovers and madmen] *have such seething brains.*' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V. Sc. 1.
With Plato. The Republic, Book X.

158. '*Pleasurable poetic fervour.*' Hazlitt probably had in his mind chap. xviii. of the *Biographia Literaria*. The words suggest that conception of poetry which was expressed by Wordsworth in his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (especially in the extended 1802 form), and which was frequently repeated by Coleridge. See, in addition to the *Biographia Literaria*, *Lectures on Shakespere*, *etc.* (Bohn's ed.), p. 49.

158. Note.—Maturin's *Bertram* was attacked in *The Courier*, 'the pen being either wielded or guided by Coleridge,' but the attack in *Biographia Literaria* was a different one. See Dykes Campbell's *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 223 note 1.

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE

A review of *Letters from the Hon. Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq. From the year* 1736 *to* 1770, published in 1818. This and other volumes of Walpole's correspondence were reprinted in Peter Cunningham's collected edition of *Walpole's Letters* (9 vols., 1857-1859), where the passages quoted by Hazlitt may be found.

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159. *Princess Amelia.* George II.'s daughter. See Walpole's *Letters*, *passim*.
George Selwyn. George Augustus Selwyn (1719-1791), the wit, Walpole's 'oldest acquaintance and friend.'
Mr. Chute. John Chute (1703-1776), a great friend of Walpole's. See especially a letter to Sir Horace Mann, 27 May, 1776.

160. '*Of outward show*,' *etc. Paradise Lost*, VIII. 539.
Pam. The Knave of Clubs, and the best trump at one form of Loo.

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161. *Balmerino.* Arthur Elphinstone, sixth Lord Balmerino (1688-1746), beheaded for participation in the Rebellion of 1745.
'*Are kept in ponderous vases.*' Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, v. 115.
163. '*Have got the start,*' *etc.* *Julius Caesar*, Act I. Sc. 2.
Poor Bentley. Richard Bentley (1708-1782), son of the scholar.
'*High fantastical.*' *Twelfth Night*, Act I. Sc. 1.
164. *Müntz.* John Henry Müntz, a Swiss, who painted and copied paintings for Walpole.
'*That which he esteemed,*' *etc.* *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 7.
Mr. Mason. William Mason (1724-1797), the poet and friend of Gray.
165. *The Mysterious Mother.* Walpole's tragedy (1768).
166. '*Himself and the universe.*' Hazlitt elsewhere says of Wordsworth (vol. I., p. 113), 'it is as if there were nothing but himself and the universe.'
'*Admit no discourse,*' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 1.
168. *Lord Ferrers.* Laurence Shirley (1720-1760), fourth Earl Ferrers, was hanged for the murder of his steward, John Johnson.
169. '*Sleep no more,*' *etc.* *Macbeth*, Act II. Sc. 2.
172. *Smithson.* Sir Hugh Smithson (1715-1786), married in 1740 the heiress of the Percy estates, succeeded to the title of Earl of Northumberland in 1750, and was created Duke in 1766.
Pope. Hazlitt refers presumably to 'Song, by a Person of Quality,' beginning, 'Flutt'ring spread thy purple pinions.'
'*Very chargeable.*' *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, Act III. Sc. 2.

LIFE OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Joseph Farington's (1747-1821) *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds* was published in 1819. This review was republished in *Criticisms on Art* (1843-4), and in *Essays on the Fine Arts* (1873).

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172. *Dispute between their late President, etc.* Relating to the election of Joseph Bonomi as professor of perspective. Reynolds resigned his membership of the Academy in Feb. 1790, but afterwards withdrew his resignation. Edmond Malone (1741-1812) published a Memoir of Reynolds in 1797.
173. '*Pleased with a rattle,*' *etc.* Pope, *Essay on Man*, II. 276.
174. *Richardson.* Jonathan Richardson (1665-1745), author of *A Theory of Painting* (1715).
Hudson. Thomas Hudson (1701-1779), portrait-painter.
177. *The French materialists.* See Helvétius, *De l'Esprit*, Discourse III.
178. '*A greater general capacity,*' *etc.* See Johnson's *Life of Cowley*.
180. *Hayman.* See Vol. I. (*The Round Table*) note to p. 149.
Highmore. *Ibid.*
'*Darted contagious fire.*' *Paradise Lost*, IX. 1036.
181. *Gandy.* See vol VI. (*Table Talk*), note to p. 21.
184. *In the days of Montesquieu.* See his *De l'Esprit des Lois*.
185. '*Like flowers,*' *etc.* *Macbeth*, Act IV. Sc. 3.
186. *Says Schlegel.* *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, I.
'*Like the forced pace,*' *etc.* *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act III. Sc. 1.
'*With coy, reluctant,*' *etc.* 'And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.' *Paradise Lost*, IV. 311.

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186. *Terrae filii.* Cf. Persius, *Satires*, vi. 59.
'*The crown which Ariadne*,' *etc.* Cf. *The Faerie Queene*, Book VI. Canto x. St. 13.
'*Their affections*,' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. 1.

187. *In that part of the country.* Winterslow presumably.
'*Returning with a choral song*,' *etc.* Wordsworth, *Ruth*, 53-54.
'*We also are not Arcadians!*' Hazlitt frequently quoted the old saying, attributed to Schidoni, 'Et ego in Arcadia vixi.' See, *e.g. Table Talk*, vol. vi. p. 168.

188. '*The unbought grace of life.*' Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (*Select Works*, ed. Payne, ii. 89).

190. *Leo.* Leo x. (1475-1521), son of Lorenzo de' Medici.
Piranesi's drawings. Giambattista Piranesi (1720-1778), engraver of architecture and ancient ruins.
Winckelman. Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), author of *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764).

191. '*All eyes*' *etc.* Cf. *Isaiah*, xlv. 22-23, and *Romans*, xiv. 11.
'*Amazing brightness*,' *etc.* Otway, *Venice Preserved*, Act i. Sc. 1.
'*A present deity*,' *etc.* Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, 35-36.
The Madona of Foligno. Raphael's, in the Vatican.
The ceiling at Parma. Painted by Girolamo Mazzola, a pupil of Correggio.

192. *Leonardo's Last Supper.* This famous fresco, now almost entirely destroyed, was at the convent of S. Maria delle Grazie at Milan.
The institution of Academies, etc. Cf. vol i. *The Round Table*, p. 160 and note, and vol. ix. p. 311 *et seq.*

195. '*The cat and canary-bird*,' *etc.* See *ante*, p. 193.
'*Leaving the thing*,' *etc.* *Philippians*, iii. 13.

196. *The Catalogue Raisonnée.* Cf. vol. i., *The Round Table*, pp. 140 *et seq.*
'*With jealous leer malign.*' *Paradise Lost*, iv. 503.

197. *Grampound.* The borough was disfranchised for corrupt practices in 1821.
'*That is true history.*' This was said by Fuseli. See vol. vi. (*Mr. Northcote's Conversations*), p. 340.

199. *Mr. West's pictures.* Benjamin West (1738-1820), president of the Royal Academy from 1792. Cf. vol. ix. pp. 318 *et seq.*
Barry. James Barry (1741-1806). Hazlitt refers to one of the pictures Barry painted for the Society of Arts in John Street, Adelphi.

200. '*The bodiless creations*,' *etc.* Cf. *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. 4, ll. 136-137.
'*Like the baseless fabric*,' *etc.* *The Tempest*, Act iv. Sc. 1.
Mr. Haydon. Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846). Mr. W. C. Hazlitt has given an account of his relations with Hazlitt. See *Memoirs*, i. 209-213, and *Four Generations of a Literary Family*, i. 234-236. At his house Hazlitt met Keats.
'*So from the root*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, v. 479-481.

201. *His own Penitent Girl.* Hazlitt seems to refer to a figure in the *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem.*
His Christ. Haydon's picture, *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*, was first exhibited in 1820. At the private view, Haydon says (Tom Taylor's *Life*, i. 371), 'the room was full, Keats and Hazlitt were up in a corner, really rejoicing.' Hazlitt is introduced into the picture 'looking at the Saviour as an investigator.' The picture is now in America. For Mrs. Siddons's opinion of the picture see *Life*, i. 372.
Mr. Haydon is a devoted, etc. See his letter in *The Examiner*, March 17, 1816.

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THE PERIODICAL PRESS

This essay is referred to by Brougham, who, on August 18, 1837, wrote to Macvey Napier (then editor of the *Edinburgh Review*) : 'I wish the *Newspaper Press* had not been flattered so much ; at any rate its glaring faults should have been pointed out. This was done, and very ill done, in 1823, when it had hardly any sins to answer for.' (*Selections from the Correspondence of Macvey Napier*, p. 199).

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204. '*We are* [I am] *nothing, if not critical. Othello*, Act II. Sc. 1. The words were used by Hazlitt as the motto to *A View of the English Stage.*

Terra plena, etc. Æneid, I. 460.

'*Large discourse,*' *etc. Hamlet*, Act IV. Sc. 4.

205. '*The pomp of elder days.*' Thomas Warton's Sonnet, 'Written in a blank leaf of Dugdale's *Monasticon.*'

206. '*Cabin'd,*' *etc. Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 4.

207. *The Children of the Mist.* In *The Legend of Montrose.*

'*A chemist,*' *etc. Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 550.

208. *Sir Thomas Lawrence.* President of the Royal Academy from 1820 till his death in 1830.

'*Though he should have, etc.* Adapted from 1 *Corinthians*, xiii. 1.

'*The toe of the scholar,*' *etc.* Varied from *Hamlet*, Act v. Sc. 1.

209. '*Take the good,*' *etc.* Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, 106.

210. '*Make the age to come her own.*' Cowley, *The Motto*, l. 2.

Mille ornatus habet, etc. 'Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.' From the first of the Sulpicia poems which are in Book IV. of the *Elegies of Tibullus*, but the authorship of which is not certainly known.

'*Now this,*' *etc.* Spenser, *Muiopotmos*, St. 22.

'*To beguile the time,*' *etc. Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 5.

211. '*Squeak and gibber.*' *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 1.

The St. James's Chronicle. Started in 1760 as a tri-weekly, independent Whig evening paper. It was for a time edited by James Mill.

212 note. Mrs. Radcliffe, the novelist, was married in 1787 to William Radcliffe, an Oxford graduate and a student of law, described by Sir Walter Scott (*Lives of the Novelists*) as 'afterwards proprietor and editor of the *English Chronicle.*'

213. *The Morning Chronicle.* Founded June 28, 1769. The early notable editors were William Woodfall (1746-1803), James Perry (1756-1821), who was editor from 1789 to 1817, and John Black (1783-1855). For Perry cf. vol. VI. *Table Talk*, p. 292.

Porson. Richard Porson (1759-1808) was Perry's brother-in-law.

Jekyll. Joseph Jekyll (d. 1837) contributed many of his jokes to *The Morning Chronicle.*

214. *The Marquis Marialva. Gil Blas*, Livre VII. chap X.

215. *Lord Nugent.* Presumably Robert, Earl Nugent (1702-1788), who retired from parliamentary life in 1784. It is odd that Hazlitt should refer to so well-known a man as *a* Lord Nugent.

The Times Newspaper. John Walter (1739-1812) in 1785 started *The Daily Universal Register*, the name of which was changed on Jan 1, 1788 to *The Times or Daily Universal Register*, and on March 18, 1788 to *The Times.*

A steam-engine. See vol. III. *Political Essays*, p. 158.

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216. '*Ever strong*,' *etc.* *King John*, Act III. Sc. 1.
'*Whiff and wind*.' *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.
'*Aggravate its voice*,' *etc.* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I. Sc. 2.

217. *Mr. Walter.* John Walter the Second (1776-1847).
A writer in his employ. Hazlitt's brother-in-law, Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Stoddart, who left *The Times* in 1817 and started *The Day and New Times*, called from 1818 onwards *The New Times*. Hazlitt frequently attacks him.
'*Champion's Legitimacy*,' *etc.* Cf. *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 1.

219. *The late queen.* Queen Caroline, George IV.'s wife, who died in 1821, shortly after her trial.
The Courier. An evening paper bought in 1799 by Coleridge's friend Daniel Stuart (1766-1846), under whose management it quickly gained a large circulation.
'*The force of dulness*,' *etc.* Cf. 'The force of nature could no farther go.' Dryden, *Lines printed under the engraved portrait of Milton.*
The ingenious editor. William Mudford (1782-1848) was editor for some years before 1828.

220. *The Sun.* An evening paper started in 1792 by Pitt's friend, George Rose.
The Traveller. Started about 1803 by Edward Quin (d. 1823). It was amalgamated with *The Globe* in 1823.
The Morning Post. Founded in 1772.
Cobbett. William Cobbett (1762-1835) who started *The Weekly Political Register* in 1802.
We once tried, *etc.* Jeffrey attacked Cobbett in the *Edinburgh* (July 1807, vol. x. p. 386).
The Examiner. Founded by John and Leigh Hunt in 1808. Hazlitt had of course been intimately associated with the paper.
The News. A Sunday paper started in 1805.
The Observer. Another Sunday paper first made successful by William Innell Clement (d. 1852), who afterwards bought *The Morning Chronicle.*

221. *The Weekly Literary Journals, Gazettes.* Of which *The Literary Gazette*, founded in 1817 and edited for a long time by William Jerdan (1782-1869), was the chief. Others were *The Literary Journal* (founded by James Mill in 1803) and *The Literary Chronicle.*
'*Coming Reviews*,' *etc.* Cf. 'And coming events cast their shadows before.' Campbell, *Lochiel's Warning*, l. 56.
The Scotsman. Started in 1817 by Charles Maclaren (1782-1866), who was editor from 1820 to 1845.
The Gentleman's Magazine. Founded in 1731 by Johnson's first employer, Edward Cave (1691-1754).
Mr. Blackwood's. Founded in April 1817 by William Blackwood (1776-1834) as *The Edinburgh Monthly Magazine.* With the seventh number (Oct. 1, 1817) the title was changed to 'Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.' The thousandth number appeared in February, 1899.
The European. Founded by James Perry in 1782.
The Lady's. The Lady's Magazine; or entertaining Companion for the fair sex, 1717-1818. A new series began in 1820.
The London. The London Magazine was started in January 1820, with John Scott (1723-1821) as editor, and for some years maintained a very high level of excellence. See Talfourd's *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb* (II. 1-9), and Mr. Bertram Dobell's *Sidelights on Charles Lamb.* Hazlitt was a regular contributor.

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221. *The Monthly.* *The Monthly Magazine* founded in 1796 by Richard (afterwards Sir Richard) Phillips (1767-1840).

The New Monthly. *The New Monthly Magazine* was started by Henry Colburn (d. 1855) in 1814, in opposition to Phillips's magazine. A new series, edited by Thomas Campbell, began in 1821. Many of Hazlitt's best-known essays were contributed to it. The working editor was Cyrus Redding (1785-1870).

The head of Memnon. Hazlitt might have seen a plate of this in *The London Magazine* for February, 1821.

Dr. Johnson's dispute, etc. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (ed. G. B. Hill), I. 154.

222. *Elia.* Lamb wrote many of his *Elia* essays in *The London Magazine*, chiefly between 1820 and 1823.

The author of Table-talk. Hazlitt himself.

The Confessions of an Opium-Eater. Published in *The London Magazine* for September and October, 1821.

Tales of Traditional Literature. A series of tales by Allan Cunningham (1784-1842), republished in 1822 as 'Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry.'

Mr. Geoffrey Crayon. Washington Irving (1783-1859), whose *Sketch Book*, to which Hazlitt probably refers, appeared in New York, 1819-1820.

'*With a blush,*' *etc.* *Troilus and Cressida*, Act I. Sc. 3.

223. *The Editor, we are afraid, etc.* Talfourd, in his *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, gives a lively account of Campbell's fastidious editorship of the *New Monthly*.

'*Lively*' [waking], *etc.* *Coriolanus*, Act IV. Sc. 5.

'*The sin,*' *etc.* *Hebrews*, xii. 1.

225. *The Anti-Jacobin.* Cf. *ante*, p. 139 and note.

'*The manna,*' *etc.* Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore.* See *ante*, p. 69.

'*The pelting,*' *etc.* *King Lear*, Act III. Sc. 4.

227. *A well-known paper.* *John Bull*, Oct. 27, 1822. On the previous Tuesday (Oct. 22) young Las Cases 'applied a horsewhip to the shoulders' of Sir Hudson Lowe, with a view, as he said, to provoke a duel. Lowe obtained a warrant for the apprehension of Las Cases, who, however, retired to France. The radical papers made great fun of the incident. See *The Examiner*, Nov. 3, 1822.

A man of classical taste, etc. Hazlitt refers to Leigh Hunt and *The Story of Rimini.* See vol. I. (*A Letter to William Gifford*), pp. 376-378 and notes.

228. *A young poet.* On Keats and his Critics see vol. VI. (*Table Talk*), p. 98 and note, and vol. IV. (*The Spirit of the Age*), pp. 302-307 and notes.

Author of the Baviad, etc. William Gifford.

229. *Such a paper was detected, etc.* This was *John Bull*, Theodore Hook's weekly paper, which on August 18, 1822, accused Mr. Fyshe Palmer, member for Reading, of having said that 'he should have a dinner at the Crown on the occasion, with a haunch of venison, and turtle, and *lots of punch.*' The detection was quoted from *The Times* in *John Bull*, Sep. 15, 1822.

LANDOR'S IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

Hazlitt here reviews the first two volumes of Walter Savage Landor's (1775-1864) *Imaginary Conversations*, published in 1824. A second edition, 'corrected and enlarged,' appeared in 1826, and vol. III. completing the 'first series,' in 1828.

Vols. IV. and V. constituting the 'second series,' were published in 1829. For an account of Hazlitt's visit to Landor at Florence in 1825 see Forster's *Walter Savage Landor, a Biography*, II. 201-211, where a subsequent letter from Hazlitt to Landor is quoted, in which he says: 'I am much gratified that you are pleased with the *Spirit of the Age*. Somebody ought to like it, for I am sure there will be plenty to cry out against it. I hope you did not find any sad blunders in the second volume; but you can hardly suppose the depression of body and mind under which I wrote some of those articles.' This review of the *Imaginary Conversations* seems to have been cut about a good deal by Jeffrey.

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231. '*Great wits*,' *etc.* *Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 163.

233. '*It travels in a road*' [strait], *etc.* *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. Sc. 3.

235. *Dashed and brewed.* Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 114.
'*To every good word*,' *etc.* *Epistle to Titus*, I. 16.

238. '*All in conscience*,' *etc.* Chaucer, *Prologue*, 150.
Note. *Tâtar.* Cf., *e.g.*,
'Persian and Copt and Tatar, in one bond
Of erring faith conjoin'd.'
Roderick, the Last of the Goths, I. 18-19.
See also *Notes and Queries*, tenth Series, I. 11, 12.

242. '*The fairest princess under sky*.' *The Faerie Queene*, Introductory Stanzas, IV.
'*Paint the lily*,' *etc.* *King John*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

243. '*Famous poets' verse*.' Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I. XI. 27, and III. IV. 1.
'*The spur*,' *etc.* *Lycidas*, 70.
Belvidera's sorrows. In Otway's *Venice Preserved*.

245. *Occasion and Furor.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book II. Canto IV.
'*Cymocles*,' *etc.* *Ibid.*, Book II. Canto VI.
The philosopher of Malmesbury. Hobbes.

250. *Horace's* '*nine years*.' 'Nonumque prematur in annum.' *Ars Poetica*, 388.
'*Que, si sous Adam*,' *etc.* A line in Boileau's tenth satire. See the Conversation between the Abbé Delille and Walter Landor.
General Mina. The second volume of *Imaginary Conversations* was dedicated to General Espoz y Mina (1784-1835), the Spanish patriot who opposed Napoleon, and, later, the tyranny of the restored Bourbons.
Balasteros. Francisco Ballasteros (1770-1832), the Spanish general, who had capitulated to the French invaders in 1823, and been banished for life.

251. *Caviare to the multitude* [general]. *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

254. *Articles in The Friend.* See *The Friend*, February 8, 1810. Coleridge referred to this essay, and quoted passages from it in one of the articles he wrote in *The Courier* in 1811. See *Essays on his own Times*, III. 829 *et seq.* These articles are probably alluded to by Hazlitt when he speaks of 'strong allusions . . . in a celebrated journal.'

255. '*Final hope*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, II. 143.
'*To shut*,' *etc.* Cf. 'She opened; but to shut excelled her power.' *Paradise Lost*, II. 883-884.
Bolivar. Simon Bolivar (1783-1830), 'the Liberator' of South America. Landor dedicated to him the third volume of his *Imaginary Conversations*.
Gebir. Published anonymously in 1798. 'Many parts of it,' says Landor (Preface to 1831 edition), 'were first composed in Latin; and I doubted in which language to complete it.'
'*Pleased they remember*,' *etc.* Cf. *Gebir*, I. 168-169.
Count Julian. Published anonymously in 1812.

EDINBURGH REVIEW

SHELLEY'S POSTHUMOUS POEMS

The volume here reviewed was published in 1824 by John and Henry L. Hunt. Hazlitt had little sympathy with Shelley either as a man or a poet. The grounds of his distrust of him as a man are given more than once, most fully, perhaps, in the essay 'On Paradox and Common-Place' (*Table Talk*, VI. 148-150), which led to the quarrel between Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt in 1821. See *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, I. 304-315, and *Four Generations of a Literary Family*, I. 130-135. As for Shelley's poetry, P. G. Patmore suggests that Hazlitt knew little or nothing of it. 'Though I have often,' he says (*My Friends and Acquaintance*, III. 136), 'heard him speak disparagingly of Shelley as a poet, I never heard him refer to a single line or passage of his published writings.' Hazlitt met Shelley at Leigh Hunt's, and the two discussed Monarchy and Republicanism until three in the morning.' See Mary Shelley's journal of 1817, quoted in Professor Dowden's *Life*, II. 103.

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256. '*Too fiery*,' *etc.* Cf. 'You know the fiery quality of the duke.' *King Lear*, Act II. Sc. 4.

'*Beyond the visible*,' *etc.* Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VII. 22.

'*All air*.' Cf. 'He is pure air and fire.' *Henry V.*, Act III. Sc. 7.

257. '*So divinely wrought*,' *etc.* Cf. John Donne, *An Anatomy of the World*, *Second Anniversary*, 245-246.

'*And dallies*,' *etc.* *Richard III.*, Act I. Sc. 3.

'*More subtle web*,' *etc.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book II. Canto XII. St. 77.

259. '*There the antics sit*.' *Richard II.*, Act. III. Sc. 2.

'*Palsied eld*.' *Measure for Measure*, Act III. Sc. 1.

260. *Mr. Shelley died*, *etc.* When Shelley's body was cast ashore near Via Reggio (July 18, 1822), a volume of Keats's poems was found in one pocket, and a volume of Sophocles in the other.

Two out of four poets, patriots, and friends. The four poets were presumably Shelley, Keats, Byron and Leigh Hunt.

Keats died young, *etc.* Cf. vol. VI. (*Table Talk*) p. 99.

A third has since been added, *etc.* Byron died at Mesolonghi, April 19, 1824.

261. *Mrs. Shelley.* Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1797-1851) married to Shelley, Dec. 30, 1816.

Alastor. Originally published in 1816.

Translation of the May-day Night. Published in *The Liberal.*

Julian and Maddalo. This poem, first published in *Posthumous Poems*, had been sent to Leigh Hunt in 1819 for publication by Ollier.

264. '*Made as flax*.' Cf. *Judges*, XV. 14.

267. *The Letter to a Friend in London.* The *Letter to Maria Gisborne* presumably.

'*Toys of feathered cupid*.' *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 3.

269. '*The sun is warm*,' *etc.* *Stanzas written in dejection near Naples.*

270. *Mr. Keats's sounding lines.* *Endymion*, Book I. 232 *et seq.*

'*Weakness and melancholy*.' Cf. *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

271. '*To elevate and surprise*.' The Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*, Act I. Sc. 1.

'*Overstep the modesty*.' *Hamlet*, Act III., Sc. 2.

'*Good set terms*.' *As You Like It*, Act II. Sc. 7.

Lord Leveson Gower. Lord Francis Leveson Gower (1800-1857), son of the second Marquis of Stafford, inherited a large property from his uncle, Francis Henry Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater, assumed the name of Egerton, and in 1846 was created Earl of Ellesmere. His translation of *Faust* appeared in 1823.

275. Note. See vol. V. pp. 202-203, and notes.

NOTES

LADY MORGAN'S LIFE OF SALVATOR

This *Life* appeared in 1823. Sydney Owenson (1783?-1859), author of *The Wild Irish Girl* in (1806), and many other less known books, was the daughter of Robert Owenson, the actor, and in 1812 married Sir Thomas Charles Morgan, the physician and philosopher. Cf. *The Spirit of the Age* (vol. IV.), p. 308, and *The Plain Speaker* (vol. VII.), p. 220. This review was republished in *Criticisms on Art* (1843-4) and in *Essays on the Fine Arts* (1873).

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278. *The miracle in Virgil.* *Æneid*, III. 37-40.

279. '*Housing with wild men*,' *etc.* Coleridge, *Zapolya*, Act II. Sc. 1.

280. '*Their mind*,' *etc.* Sir Edward Dyer's poem, beginning 'My mind to me a kingdom is.'

'*In measureless content.*' *Macbeth*, Act II. Sc. 1.

'*Unjust tribunals*,' *etc.* *Samson Agonistes*, 695.

282. '*Pride, pomp*,' *etc.* *Othello*, Act III. Sc. 3.

283. *The celebrated Lanfranco.* Giovanni Lanfranco (1581-1647), the painter.

'*Skins and films*,' *etc.* Cf. *Hamlet*. Act III. Sc. 4.

287. '*Another moon*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, v. 311.

291. '*According to Lord Bacon*,' *etc.* *Advancement of Learning*, Bk. II. iv. p. 2.

'*Burke, in a like manner*,' *etc.* See *A Letter to a Member of the National Assembly*, 1791 (*Works*, Bohn, II. p. 535, *et seq.*)

292. '*Moralizes*,' *etc.* *As You Like It*, Act II. Sc. 1.

Bernini. Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), the sculptor.

296. *Passeri.* Giovanni Battista Passeri (1610?-1679), author of *Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, e Architetti, etc.* (1772).

Mrs. Radcliffe's Italian. Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, 1797.

Thaddeus of Warsaw. By Jane Porter (1776-1850), published in 1803.

298. '*Like a wounded snake*,' *etc.* Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (II), 357.

300. '*Where universal Pan*,' *etc.* *Paradise Lost*, IV. 266-268.

301. *Massaniello.* Tommaso Aniello—called Masaniello—(1623-1647), the fisherman leader of the Neapolitan revolt against the Spanish viceroy in 1647.

AMERICAN LITERATURE—DR. CHANNING

This review is stated to be Hazlitt's in the volume of *Selections from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier*, p. 70 note. Jeffrey writes to Napier, Nov. 23, 1829 (*Ibid.* pp. 69-70): 'Your American reviewer is not a first-rate man, a clever writer enough, but not deep or judicious, or even very fair. I have no notion who he is. If he is young he may come to good, but he should be trained to a more modest opinion of himself, and to take a little more pains, and go more patiently and thoroughly into his subject.' Carlyle, on the other hand, writes, Jan. 27. 1830 (*Ibid.* p. 78): 'I liked the last [number] very well; the review of Channing seemed to me especially good.' It is very strange that Jeffrey should not have recognised Hazlitt's manner. Procter (*An Autobiographical Fragment*, p. 261) quotes a letter from Jeffrey of May 12, 1826, in which he says, 'Can you tell me anything of our ancient ally Hazlitt?'

310. *Mr. Brown.* Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), one of the earliest of American writers, author of *Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1800), *Edgar Huntley* (1801), *Clara Howard* (1801), and *Jane Talbot* (1804).

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The first four of these are mentioned by Peacock as amongst the books 'which took the deepest root in Shelley's mind, and had the strongest influence on the formation of his character.'

310. *Mr. Cooper.* James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), whose most famous novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*, had appeared in 1826.

311. *An ample tribute of respect.* See reviews in the *Edinburgh* of *The Sketch Book* (Aug. 1820), and *Bracebridge Hall* (Nov. 1822). Both were written by Jeffrey.

Frankenstein. Mrs. Shelley's novel (1818).

'*Of Brownies,*' *etc.* 'Of Brownies and of bogillis full this buke.' Gawin Douglas, *Aeneis*, VI. Prol. 18.

They hoot the Beggar's Opera, etc. Cf. vol. VIII. (*Dramatic Essays*), p. 473 and note.

312. *Our own unrivalled novelist.* Sir Walter Scott.

313. *The historiographer of Brother Jonathan.* Hazlitt refers to John Neal's *Brother Jonathan: or the New Englanders.* 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1825.

His Pilot. 1823.

'*To suffer,*' *etc.* *The Tempest*, Act I. Sc. 2.

314. '*Line upon line,*' *etc.* *Isaiah*, XXVIII. 10.

Franklin. Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790).

Poor Robin. Poor Richard's Almanac, begun by Franklin in 1732, and continued with great success for twenty-five years.

1754. This apparently should be 1764.

'*Metre-ballad-mongering.*' Cf. *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act III. Sc. 1.

315. *Jonathan Edwards.* Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), whose *Freedom of the Will* appeared in 1754. Cf. Hazlitt's philosophical lectures in vol. XI.

'*An honest method.*' *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

316. *Dr. Channing.* William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), minister of a Congregational church in Boston from 1803. He had visited England in 1822. Hazlitt is here reviewing *Sermons and Tracts: including Remarks on the Character and Writings of Milton, and of Fenelon; and an analysis of the Character of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1829.

320. *In answer to Fenelon.* Channing's 'Remarks' were upon a volume of Selections from Fénelon, published in Boston, 1829.

323. *Bishop Butler's Sermons.* 1726.

325. '*Wise above what is written.*' Cf. 1 *Corinthians*, iv. 6.

'*With authority,*' *etc.* *S. Matthew*, vii. 29.

326. '*As having something,*' *etc.* *The Advancement of Learning*, Book II. iv. 2.

327. '*The father of lies.*' Cf. Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Partition I. Sec. IV. Member i. Subsection 4.

328. *Fielding's character of Mr. Abraham Adams. Joseph Andrews*, Book III. chap. 5.

329. '*No babies.*' 'I am no baby.' *Titus Andronicus*, Act V. Sc. 3.

FLAXMAN'S LECTURES ON SCULPTURE

A review of John Flaxman's (1755-1826) *Lectures on Sculpture* (1829). The review was republished in *Criticisms on Art* (1843-4) and in *Essays on the Fine Arts* (1873). Flaxman had been professor of sculpture at the Royal Academy from 1810. In his *Memoirs of William Hazlitt* (II. 269) Mr. W. C. Hazlitt gives a number of marginal notes made by Hazlitt upon his copy of Flaxman's Lectures probably with a view to this article.

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335. *Torregiano.* Pietro Torrigiano (c. 1470-1522), the Florentine sculptor who broke Michael Angelo's nose. He came to England in 1509.
'*A city,*' *etc.* *S. Matthew*, v. 14.
336. '*High and palmy.*' *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 1.
'*Growing with its growth.*' Pope, *Essay on Man*, II. 136.
341. *Sir Anthony Carlisle.* Sir Anthony Carlisle (1768-1840), the surgeon, studied for a time at the Royal Academy, and wrote an essay 'On the Connection between Anatomy and the Fine Arts,' to which Hazlitt probably refers.
344. '*To make Gods,*' *etc.* Cf. *Genesis*, i. 26.
'*Hitherto,*' *etc.* *Job*, xxxviii. 11.
345. '*The labour,*' *etc.* *Macbeth*, Act II. Sc. 3.
348. '*Shreds and patches.*' *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 4.
'*Upon her eyebrows,*' *etc.* *The Faerie Queene*, Book II. Canto III. St. 25.
349. '*By their own beauty,*' *etc.* Cf. 'By our own spirits are we deified.' Wordsworth, *Resolution and Independence*, 47.
350. '*The scale,*' *etc.* Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VIII. 591-592.
351. *Incendio del Borgo.* Raphael's fresco in the Vatican.

WILSON'S LIFE AND TIMES OF DANIEL DEFOE

Walter Wilson's (1781-1847) *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe* was published in 3 vols. in 1830.

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355. *Tutchin and Ridpath.* John Tutchin (1661?-1707) and George Ridpath (d. 1726), two Whig contemporaries of Defoe, successive editors of *The Observator.*
Dispraise of the Beggars' Opera. See Wilson's *Memoirs, etc., of Defoe*, III. 595-596.
356. '*Excellent iteration in him.*' Cf. *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act I. Sc. 2.
As honest Hector Macintyre, etc. See *The Antiquary*, chap. xx.
'*Thinly scattered,*' *etc.* *Romeo and Juliet*, Act V. Sc. 1.
Rari nantes, etc. *Æneid*, I. 118.
356. '*I remember my grandfather,*' *etc.* Wilson's *Memoirs, etc. of Defoe*, I. 6, and Defoe's *Review*, vii. Pref.
357. *Mr. Samuel Wesley.* Samuel Wesley the elder (1662-1735), whose attack on the education of the Dissenters (1703) engaged him in a controversy.
Shortest Way with the Dissenters. 1702.
358. *Harley.* Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford (1661-1724).
'*Heaven lies about us,*' *etc.* Wordsworth, Ode, *Intimations of Immortality*, 66.
'*Poor Robinson Crusoe,*' *etc.* *Robinson Crusoe*, Section xv.
358. *True-born Englishman.* 1701.
Review. 1704-1713.
Essays on Trade. Defoe wrote several tracts on the subject of trade.
360. *Legion Petition.* 'Legion's Memorial' to the House of Commons in reference to the Kentish Petition of 1701. A second Memorial appeared in the following year.
'*Heaping coals of fire,*' *etc.* *Romans*, xii. 20.
'*Stuff of the conscience.*' *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 2.
'*A foregone conclusion.*' *Othello*, Act III. Sc. 3.
361. *Toland.* John Toland (1670-1722), the deist.
362. Note. See Wilson's *Memoirs, etc., of Defoe*, I. 73 note.

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363. '*There goes a very honest gentleman*,' *etc.* According to Madame de La Fayette (*Mémoires de la Cour de France*), it was Louvois' brother, the Archbishop of Rheims, who, on seeing James come from Mass, said: 'Voilà un fort bon homme, il a quitté trois royaumes pour une messe.'

Dr. Sherlock. William Sherlock (1641 ?-1707), one of the non-jurors for a short time after the Revolution.

364. *An eloquent passage.* See Wilson's *Memoirs, etc., of Defoe*, I. 76-77 and Defoe's *Review*, IV. 643-644.

The Exclusion Bill. Passed by the House of Commons and rejected by the House of Lords, 1680.

A very curious account. Wilson's *Memoirs, etc. of Defoe*, I. 156 *et seq.*

366. *His Complete Tradesman.* *The Complete English Tradesman*, 1727.

367. '*To keep their seats firm.*' *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (*Select Works*, ed. Payne, II. 97).

'*The fate of James*,' *etc.* Wilson's *Memoirs, etc. of Defoe*, I. 162-163.

368. '*Courage had been screwed*,' *etc.* Cf. *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 7.

An Address to the Dissenters. This pamphlet (1687) seems to have been Bishop Burnet's. See Lee's *Life of Defoe* and *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser. IV. 253, 307.

The Marquis of Halifax. George Savile, Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695). The pamphlet referred to by Hazlitt appeared in 1686.

369. *An early Piece.* Lee (*Life of Defoe*, I. 15) regards this piece (1683) and *Speculum Crapegownorum* (1682) as spurious.

Lives of the Philipses. William Godwin's *Lives of Edward and John Philips*, 1815.

Note. *An Appeal to Honour and Justice.* 1715.

370. '*The Hortus Siccus of Dissent.*' *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (*Select Works*, ed. Payne, II. 14).

Oldmixon. John Oldmixon (1673-1742), whose *History of England during the Reign of the Royal House of Stuart* was published in 3 vols. 1729-1739.

371. '*Though that his joy*,' *etc.* *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 1.

372. '*Not pierceable*,' *etc.* Cf. 'Not perceable with power of any starr.' *The Faerie Queene*, Book I. Canto I. St. 7.

373. '*Speaking a word*,' *etc.* Cf. *Proverbs*, XV. 23.

374. *Sacheverell.* Henry Sacheverell (1674-1724). The sermon referred to was preached before the University of Oxford on June 2, 1702. See Wilson's *Memoirs, etc. of Defoe*, II. 27-28.

'*So should his anticipation*,' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

375. *A Hymn to the Pillory.* 1703.

'*See where on high*,' *etc.* 'Earless on high stood unabash'd De Foe.' *The Dunciad*, II. 147.

'*Dishonour, honourable.*' Cf. 'Honour dishonourable.' *Paradise Lost*, IV. 314.

'*Condemned to everlasting fame.*' 'Damned to everlasting fame.' Pope, *Essay on Man*, IV. 284.

'*Oh soul supreme*,' *etc.* Pope, *Moral Essays*, Epistle V. 23-24.

'*The fellow that was pilloried.*' See Swift's *A Letter from a Member of the House of Commons in Ireland, to a Member of the House of Commons in England, concerning the Sacramental Test* (1709).

'*The superficial part of learning.*' Gay, in his *Present State of Wit* (1711), spoke of Defoe as a 'fellow, who had excellent natural parts, but wanted a small foundation of learning.'

376. '*Flying to others*,' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 1.

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376. '*Why troublest thou*,' *etc.* Cf. 'Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?' *S. Matthew*, viii. 29.

377. *William Benson.* William Benson (1682-1754). Defoe was prosecuted and imprisoned for his anti-Jacobite tracts of 1713, *Reasons against the Succession of the House of Hanover*, *etc.*

'*The force of dulness*,' *etc.* Cf. Dryden, *Lines printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton*, 5.

378. *His History of that event. History of the Union of Great Britain*, 1709.

Apology for the Massacre of Glencoe. In Defoe's *History of the Union*, 4to. edition, pp. 68-73.

'*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*,' *etc.* See Wilson's *Memoirs*, *etc.*, *of Defoe*, II. 457.

379. *His novels.* Those referred to by Hazlitt are *Moll Flanders*, 1721; *Roxana*, 1724; *Captain Singleton*, 1720; *Colonel Jack*, 1722; and *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, 1720.

The Family Instructor. 1715-1718.

'*Meddling with the unclean thing*.' Cf. 2 *Corinthians*, VI. 17.

380. '*All the fore-end of his time*.' *Cymbeline*, Act III. Sc. 3.

'*Vice, by losing*,' *etc.* Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (*Select Works*, ed. Payne, II. 89).

'*Purple light*.' Cf. 'The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.' Gray, *The Progress of Poesy*, 41.

381. *What Mr. Lamb says*, *etc.* See Lamb's 'Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels,' written for Wilson's *Life of Defoe* (III. 636). The paper is reprinted in *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, I. 325-327.

382. *Imposed upon Lord Chatham.* See Wilson's *Memoirs*, *etc.*, *of Defoe*, III. 509.

History of Apparitions. An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions, 1727.

'*Call spirits*,' *etc. Henry IV.*, Part I., Act III. Sc. I.

History of the Plague. Journal of the Plague Year, 1722.

MR. GODWIN

This was ostensibly a review of *Cloudesley*, published in 1830. Some years previously Sir James Mackintosh had suggested that Hazlitt should be asked to review Godwin's novels. Towards the end of 1823 he wrote to Godwin: 'I see your novels advertised to-day. Could you ask Mr. Hazlitt to review them in the *Edinburgh Review*. He is a very original thinker, and notwithstanding some singularities which appear to me faults, a very powerful writer. I say this, though I know he is no panegyrist of mine. His critique might serve all our purposes, and would, I doubt not, promote the interests of literature also.' (C. Kegan Paul, *William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries*, II. 289.) The *Edinburgh* had reviewed Godwin's *Fleetwood* (vol. VI. p. 182), and had praised *Caleb Williams* very highly in a review of the *Lives of Edward and John Philips* (XXV. p. 485). Cf. Hazlitt's sketch of Godwin in *The Spirit of the Age*, vol. IV. pp. 200 *et seq.*, and notes.

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385. *Dramatised. Caleb Williams* was dramatised by George Colman the younger as *The Iron Chest*. See vol. VIII. (*A View of the English Stage*), p. 342.

386. '*Seemed like another morn*,' *etc. Paradise Lost*, V. 310-311.

'*Even in his ashes*,' *etc.* Cf. Gray, *Elegy written in a Country Church-Yard*, 92.

387. *Otium cum dignitate.* Cicero, *Pro Sestio*, XLV. 98.

'*Retired leisure*,' *etc. Il Penseroso*, 49-50.

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387. *Horas non numero, etc.* The motto of a sun-dial near Venice. See Hazlitt's essay 'On a Sun-Dial.'
'*The iron rod*,' *etc.* Vaguely quoted from *Paradise Lost*, II. 90-92.
'*Stretched upon the rack*,' *etc.* Cf. *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 2.
'*And like a gallant horse*,' *etc.* *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. Sc. 3.
There is only one living writer. Scott, no doubt.

388. '*O let not virtue*,' *etc.* Loosely quoted from *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. Sc. 3.
'*To elevate and surprise*.' The Duke of Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*, Act I. Sc. 1.
'*Takes an inventory*.' Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*, Act III. Sc. 2.

391. '*A pass of wit*.' Cf. 'Wit shall not go unrewarded while I am king of this country. "Steal by line and level" is an excellent pass of pate.' *The Tempest*, Act IV. Sc. 1.
'*O'ersteps*,' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 2.

392. *Annesley.* Hazlitt refers to the well-known case of James Annesley (1715-1760), who claimed to be the legitimate son and heir of Lord Altham. The story will be found in Howell's *State Trials* (vols. XVI. and XVII.), and has been used by other novelists besides Godwin. See *Peregrine Pickle* (chap. 98) and Charles Reade's *The Wandering Heir*. Godwin, in the advertisement to *Cloudesley*, says: 'It is but just that the reader should be informed that a novel has been already written on this theme, and printed in the year 1743, under the title of "Memoirs of an unfortunate young Nobleman, Returned from a Thirteen Years' Slavery in America."' This is presumably the work referred to by Hazlitt as 'a novel with the title of *Annesley*.' In 1756 appeared *The Case of the Honourable J. A., humbly offered to all lovers of truth and justice.*
'*Mark and likelihood*.' *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act III. Sc. 2.

393. *Multum abludit imago.* Horace, *Satires*, II. 3, 320.
'*Subject* [servile] *to all*,' *etc.* *Measure for Measure*, Act III. Sc. 1.
'*A fiery soul*,' *etc.* Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 156-158.

394. '*But the lees*,' *etc.* Loosely quoted from *Macbeth*, Act II. Sc. 3.
'*After a thousand victories*,' *etc.* Shakespeare, Sonnet XXV.
'*A great man's memory*,' *etc.* Cf. *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 2.

395. '*At first no bigger*,' *etc.* Cf. *S. Matthew*, xiii. 31.

397. '*A consummation*,' *etc.* *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 1.
'*The scale by which we ascend*.' Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VIII. 591-592.

398. '*Reaches the verge*,' *etc.* Cf. Pope, *Moral Essays*, II. 52.

399. *His New Man of Feeling.* *Fleetwood; or, The New Man of Feeling*, 1805.
Mandeville. 1817.
Life of Chaucer. 1803.
Essay on Sepulchres. 1809.
Mr. Malthus's theory. See vol. IV. (*The Spirit of the Age*), p. 296.

400. *Sermons. Sketches of History, in Six Sermons*, 1784.
An English Grammar. The grammar was written by Hazlitt himself and published by Mrs. Godwin at the Skinner Street house. See vol IV., Bibliographical Note on p. 388. It contained a letter written by Godwin under the pseudonym of Edward Baldwin.

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